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# MODERN ESSAYS

Selected and annotated with a view to teaching  
the art of essay-writing to Indian Students.

BY

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## DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this my first book to

### **MY FATHER AND MOTHER**

to whom I owe my enjoyment of literature. And on this page I wish to remember my friend, Mr. Chand Mal, who was with me all the time the book was a-preparing and who helped and encouraged me. I desire also to thank three of my Delhi friends for their help, Mr. R. S. Capron, Mr. R. C. Lorimer, and Mr. S. Das Gupta.

H. W. P.



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## FOREWORD TO THE STUDENTS

Dear Reader, (if the form of address common with Charles Lamb, best of essay-writers, be permitted), we are all essay-writers. If on holiday you keep a journal, setting down where you stay, what you have eaten, what seen, that is a form of essay-writing. Indeed, it is conjectured that that is how Montaigne's *Essays* took their origin, and Montaigne may be considered the inventor of the essay. When you have to make a speech, if you are wise, you will write it down first, however you may deliver it later without notes. Then many of our letters are or should be essays, for in them we seek to share something of ourselves with others. Thus the essay is Everyman's literary medium which he may practise ill or well, and in which he may seek to become a master. Many of us find verse a difficult art, and we lack the immense knowledge and sustaining power for the novel and the drama, but it is different with the essay. We all have ideas, a revelation to share, a daily life and an absent friend. Surely it should be one of the first aims of educationalists to make men articulate, to teach them to express themselves clearly and pleasingly in their letters, in their articles to the newspapers, in their speeches. To describe a holiday well is better than having a camera, better even than having the gift to paint. But many people, even educated people, think with Dogberry that to write and read comes by nature.



One reason why the essay is an art that every man may learn is that it is so various and personal ; therefore it is suitable for *your* temperament and will express *your* thoughts. It may be any length, from a page to a book. Any subject, any knowledge, any experience, anything you have seen or enjoyed may be the subject of an essay, or form the starting-point, or be used for illustration. In this selection there is an essay on a holiday adventure (*The Harbour in the North*), an essay on the advantages and disadvantages of being born rich (*The Son of Success*), essays on games, flowers, and a piece of chalk, an exhortation to students and an essay on the dangers of becoming too speculative. The treatment may be as various as the subjects and length. Compare the straightforward, plain style and common sense treatment of Mr. Bennett with the imaginative seeing of Mr. Galsworthy; or the gracious fooling of Mr. Chesterton with the sarcasm, the genuine feeling shewn in Alice Meynell's defence of Mrs. Johnson.

I am repeatedly asked by students : how can I improve my essays? There is no single prescription. It is like tennis, you need to watch others and practise regularly; but by stating the chief faults of Indian students in their essays, I may be able to show better the beautiful workmanship of the essays in this selection.

You fail chiefly in your essays because they lack sincerity. This is partly because you do not enjoy writing, you do not make yourself interested in the piece of work you are engaged in, and partly because you have not been taught to be personal in your essays,

to speak of things that you are interested in. Do you not feel that the authors in this book are enthusiastic in their work? Benson is enthusiastic in waving a little flag of revolt against the sporting tyranny. Mr. Galsworthy has enjoyed intensely the waking night which he calls Buttercup Night. Therefore they can impart their enjoyment, interest, enthusiasm. It means a zest for life, and if you have no zest for life, you must either acquire it or give up essay writing. One of the most difficult subjects for an essay is 'service'; another would be 'education'. I know and dread what many of you would write on social service. Instead of speaking of social service you have yourself witnessed or been privileged to share in, you would talk of social service as the grandest thing in life. That is either a truism or an inaccuracy. I think the latter. And platitudes and truisms are an abomination to the essay. Many, if bidden to write on education, would oscillate between overpraising learning and inveighing against the present system. Now study the plain honest thought of Dr. John Brown, as useful and secure to-day as it was in 1861, and only needing a little adaptation on your part to meet the needs of the Indian youth. Advising teachers on the training of their students, he says: "Above all, try to get hold of their affections, and make them put their hearts into their work." That is what is needed for essay-writing : to put your heart into your work.

In about twelve of these essays the author speaks in the first person, and I think much harm has been done and misunderstanding created by the indiscriminate and unqualified instruction to students that they are

not to write in the first person. Doubtless the intention is good, to guard against unpleasant self-assertion in the young essayist, but its fruits are not true sense and taste and modesty, still less is it conducive to free and natural expression. Is it not better to correct exaggerated opinions and crude feeling in the young disciple than force him into an indirect and stilted style? Remember, then, that the essay is the most intimate and personal of literary forms, and it is probable that whatever genuinely interests you will interest your readers. When Sir Philip Sidney in a sonnet complained that he had no art to express his love or vie with other poets, his muse chid him—

Fool ! said my muse to me, look in thy heart  
and write.

Take that for your motto.

Exaggeration, or the inability to see more than one view of a subject, is another serious fault in your essays, and we all know in these days in India what an ugly thing exaggeration is. There are Englishmen who exaggerate India's communal divisions and the consequent temptation for Indians to be unfair and partial. Likewise there are Indians who talk as if Englishmen had no other motives for differing from them than commercial motives. Exaggeration is an ugly, unprofitable thing. Now if you were given an essay on wealth and poverty, many of you would confine your remarks to the pride and laziness and self-indulgence of rich men. But, surely, great wealth used wisely is common enough in history and a more fertile as well as a more interesting theme. One of the most attractive

men I have met is a millionaire. We must learn to walk round a subject, and that is what you will see Mr. Bennett doing in *A Son of Success*. If you want to become a good essayist you must learn to watch, and that is something that most of us are not very good at. It is said that the reason why most of us cannot draw or paint is because we have not the artist's eye. If you doubt this, test yourself by some common object that you see every day, a bulbul or some common Indian flower. Suppose the cunning which we think of as the artist's gift were suddenly granted to your hand, would you know the shape of the bulbul's tuft or the number of petals in the flower or the colours in its centre? You may say that you have never had such an experience as Mr. Belloc describes in *The Harbour in the North*; perhaps you have not looked for one. At least you have seen processions such as Mr. Galsworthy describes. What would your description have been like? How much have you seen and felt that is worth remembering?

When writing an essay you must woo, you must win your reader. No writer knew better how to do this than Charles Lamb. He takes the reader into his confidence, addresses him individually, confesses his foibles and weaknesses and shares his most earnest longings and pleasures. But Lamb's style is his own; not to be imitated. You may study for yourself how the authors in this book win the reader's attention. One begins: "It is a new year, and I have begun a new life. This, I think, is better than merely talking about it. But it is more difficult and brings one just as little credit." Another dares everything and confesses that

he does not like games. You may be startled and disgusted, but you are bound to read on. Mr. Chesterton is a master of the small digression, the alluring aside. "I suppose," he suddenly exclaims, "every one must have reflected how primeval and how poetical are the things that one carries in one's pocket; the pocket-knife, for instance, the type of all human tools, the infant of the sword. Once I planned to write a book of poems entirely about the things in my pocket. But I found it would be too long; and the age of the great epics is past." W. H. Hudson rambles off into an attack on gardens and confesses how he chafes while being shown over them, but returns with: "I am going too far, and perhaps making an enemy of a reader when I would much prefer to have him (or her) for a friend". The speaker must speak to his audience and not in spite of them, he must remember their intelligence, humour them, and constantly bear them in mind. So it must be with the essayist. After all, a man does you a great compliment in hearing what you have to say or reading what you have written, and the least you can do is to take all pains to make the task easy and pleasant for him. Personally I think economics an unlovely science "harsh and crabbed" (not to finish the quotation) and if a student writes me an essay on that subject I expect him to reduce to a minimum all its jargon and lead me upward by pleasant paths, however steep, until I begin to feel that economics is an inspiring, a noble and a useful study. It is good practice for you to address yourself in some of your essays to an English audience, especially if you are describing Indian life, scenes and customs, or trying to express the Indian point of view in the present political struggle. Then

your success must be measured by one thing only, namely, how clear you make yourself to the English public, how much you interest them, and how far you win their assent. Yet I have known students compose a speech for an English audience showing no appreciation of the Englishman's ignorance of Indian problems, no appreciation of the Englishman's rooted opinions or prejudices, whichever they may be.

There is one thing which every good essay must have and that is an inherent unity. The more variety there is in it, the more unexpected and frequent the digressions, the more the unity must appear. Often your essays lack both variety and unity, but notice what a single purpose there is running through *Games* or *Truth-Hunting*. The authors go so far as to express it briefly and plainly at some point in the essays. There is one dominating idea in all that W. H. Hudson says of flowers, and one desire to vindicate Mrs. Johnson in Alice Meynell's essay. *The Harbour in the North*, *The Little Joys of Margaret*, *The Procession* and *Buttercup Night* are descriptive, yet there is nothing loose about them. Each has a controlling idea or vision which is creative and stamps the description as the personal work of the artist. He gives you of himself in describing things that all might have seen. It is an illustration of Coleridge's saying :

We receive but what we give,  
And in our life alone does Nature live :  
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud !

But within the unity there is a glorious and infinite variety. I wish to speak of what one might call

the ornaments of the essay, though in truth they appear organic to the good essay. There are, first, quotations to illustrate the thought. They do more than this. When they are recognized by the reader, as they generally should be, they come like old friends, friends common to the author and his reader. They are of two kinds: the direct deliberate quotation, and the indirect, half unconscious recollection. For a beautifully apt quotation of the first kind take the half line from *Cymbeline* in Hudson's essay :

The azured harebell, like thy veins.

You feel that it is a real proof in Hudson's argument that Shakespeare should have thrown off lightly this illustration of what Hudson works out in detail.

I had a master at school who would say : "Young men and women fresh from the university cannot teach literature. To be a teacher of literature your memory must echo with what the makers of literature and language have written, and your speech must witness to it. To speak and write well you must use the materials that have been created for you by those who had the gift." That is why in all these essays you will find echoes of the masters, especially of the Bible and Shakespeare. Some of them I have pointed out in the Notes. For an obvious example, take this sentence from *The Son of Success* : 'But I am only cruel to be kind.' That is what Hamlet said to his mother, and one may claim that it has passed from Shakespeare to the English language.

The digression is a favourite and pleasing feature of the essay. It may be a brief aside, startling,

parenthetical, as in this sentence where Hudson is speaking of luminous red in flowers : "It is, in fact, the colour of blood, and that bright fluid, which is the life, and is often spilt, comes very much into the human associations of flowers." Or it may be much longer, like the page of close and loving description of the English countryside in the essay on *Games*. Allusions and illustrations partake of the nature of a digression. Mr. Birrell takes one of the most lovable figures in English literature, Charles Lamb, and by touching skilfully upon some events in his life, his sayings, habits and well-known character, establishes the probability that the good and happy life is one in which speculation does not play a great part. Other allusions are more brief like that to the Dying Gaul in *Buttercup Night* or Edwin Arnold's comparison of the colours and lines in the Moti Musjid with the "meandering veins, the flush of the blood, and the shadows of the warm flesh" in a beautiful woman's body. The first gives an instantaneous picture to the reader and helps him to visualize the scene in the stable better. The second not only assists in describing the mosque but suggests the quiet throbbing life which is found in all great works of art.

Many of the essays in this book show how the particular and the general, the lively illustration and the abstract should be blended. Dr. John Brown gives a page of definite, practical suggestions for invigorating the mind and refreshing the entire nature of the student, he tells us what we are to read and how we are to conserve our time, and then he gathers all up into the inspiring metaphor of climbing a hill—inspiring and illuminating, for the comparison holds



good in all its parts. In *Agra and the Taj* description is balanced by historical interest. In *Buttercup Night* and in *A Night among the Pines* the author's thought breaks in upon the narrative with pleasing unexpectedness yet naturalness. *The Little Joys of Margaret* also affords a good example of the simplest of tales shooting out into thoughts which reach as high as heaven.

This will give some idea of the rich variety in the essay, though I have said nothing of the humour of Benson or the mock heroic style of Mr. Lynd. These are more difficult for the young essayist to employ, especially if he is writing in a foreign tongue. Read and enjoy those who have acquired the art of essay-writing. Learn from all but imitate none. Write in your own way your own thoughts, having simplicity, description, passion in your style, as the occasion requires, but always remembering that the greatest of these is simplicity. Do not be discouraged when you find it hard to express yourself, when you feel small inclination to write, when you seem to make no progress. 'Thou art no thy lane.' A man will go to Rome to study painting or spend all the years of his life in acquiring the mastery in music. To become a master of English prose is not a quicker or an easier task. Learn to write in English, and also mould your vernacular to your use and express in it things beautiful and true for your countrymen.

## GAMES

BY

A. C. BENSON

It requires almost more courage to write about games nowadays than it does to write about the Decalogue, because the higher criticism is tending to make a belief in the Decalogue a matter of taste, while to the ordinary Englishman a belief in games is a matter of faith and morals.

I will begin by saying frankly that I do not like games; but I say it, not because any particular interest attaches to my own dislikes and likes, but to raise a little flag of revolt against a species of social tyranny. I believe that there are a good many people who do not like games, but who do not dare to say so. Perhaps it may be thought that I am speaking from the point of view of a person who has never been able to play them. A vision rises in the mind of a spectacled owlsh man, trotting feebly about a football field, and making desperate attempts to avoid the proximity of the ball ; or joining in a game of cricket, and fielding a drive with the air of a man trying to catch an insect on the ground or sitting in a boat with the oar fixed under his chin, being forced backwards with an air of smiling and virtuous confusion. I hasten to say that this is not a true picture. I arrived at a reasonable degree of proficiency in several games: I was a competent,

though not a zealous; oar ; I captained a college football team, and I do not hesitate to say that I have derived more pleasure from football than from any other form of exercise. I have climbed some mountains, and am even a member of the Alpine Club ; I may add that I am a keen, though not a skilful, sportsman, and am indeed rather a martyr to exercise and open air. I make these confessions simply to show that I do not approach the subject from the point of view of a sedentary person but indeed rather the reverse. No weather appears to me to be too bad to go out in, and I do not suppose there are a dozen days in the year in which I do not contrive to get exercise.

But exercise in the open air is one thing, and games are quite another. It seems to me that when a man has reached an age of discretion, he ought no longer to need the stimulus of competition, the desire to hit or kick balls about, the wish to do such things better than other people. It seems to me that the elaborate organization of athletics is a really rather serious thing, because it makes people unable to get on without some species of excitement. I was staying the other day at a quiet house in the country, where there was nothing particular to do ; there was not, strange to say, even a golf course within reach. There came to stay there for a few days an eminent golfer, who fell into a condition of really pitiable dejection. The idea of taking a walk or riding a bicycle was insupportable to him ; and I think he never left the house except for a rueful stroll in the garden. When I was a schoolmaster it used to distress me to find how invariably the parents of boys discoursed with earnestness and solemnity about a boy's games ; one was told that

a boy was a good field, and really had the makings of an excellent bat ; eager inquiries were made as to whether it was possible for the boy to get some professional coaching ; in the case of more philosophically inclined parents it generally led on to a statement of the social advantages of being a good cricketer, and often to the expression of a belief that virtue was in some way indissolubly connected with keenness in games. For one parent who said anything about a boy's intellectual interests, there were ten whose pre-occupation in the boy's athletics was deep and vital.

It is no wonder that, with all this parental earnestness, boys tended to consider success in games the one paramount object of their lives ; it was all knit up with social ambitions, and it was viewed, I do not hesitate to say, as of infinitely more importance than anything else. I do not mean to say that many of the boys did not consider it important to be good, and did not desire to be conscientious about their work. But as a practical matter games were what they thought about and talked about, and what aroused genuine enthusiasm. They were disposed to despise boys who could not play games, however virtuous, kindly, and sensible they might be ; an entire lack of conscientiousness, and even grave moral obliquity, were apt to be condoned in the case of a successful athlete. We masters, I must frankly confess, did not make any serious attempt to fight the tendency. We spent our spare time in walking about the cricket and football fields, in looking on, in discussing the fine nuances in the style of individual players. It was very natural to take an interest in the thing which was to the boys a matter of profound concern ; but what

I should be inclined to censure was that it was really a matter of profound concern with ourselves; and we did not take a kindly and paternal interest in the matter so much as the interest of enthusiasts and partisans.

It is very difficult to see how to alter this. Probably, like other deep-seated national tendencies, it will have to cure itself. It would be impossible to insist that the educators of youth should suppress the interests which they instinctively and genuinely feel in games, and profess an interest in intellectual matters which they do not really feel. No good would come out of practising hypocrisy in the matter, from however high a motive. While schoolmasters rush off to golf whenever they get a chance, and fill their holidays to the brim with games of various kinds, it would be simply hypocritical to attempt to conceal the truth; and the difficulty is increased by the fact that, while parents and boys alike feel as they do about the essential importance of games, head-masters are more or less bound to select men for masterships who are proficient in them; because whatever else has to be attended to at school, games have to be attended to; and, moreover, a man whom the boys respect as an athlete is likely to be more effective both as a disciplinarian and a teacher. If a man is a first-rate slow bowler, the boys will consider his views on Thucydides and Euclid more worthy of consideration than the views of a man who has only a high university degree.

The other day I was told of the case of a head-master of a small proprietary private school, who was

treated with open insolence and contempt by one of his assistants, who neglected his work, smoked in his class-room, and even absented himself on occasions without leave. It may be asked why the head-master did not dismiss his recalcitrant assistant. It was because he had secured a man who was a 'Varsity cricket blue, and whose presence on the staff gave the parents confidence, and provided an excellent advertisement. The assistant, on the other hand, knew that he could get a similar post for the asking, and on the whole, preferred a school where he might consult his own convenience. This is, of course, an extreme case; but would to God, as Dr. Johnson said, that it were an impossible one! I do not wish to tilt against athletics, nor do I at all undervalue the benefits of open air and exercise for growing boys. But surely there is a lamentable want of proportion about the whole view. The truth is that we English are in many respects barbarians still, and as we happen at the present time to be wealthy barbarians, we devote our time and our energies to the things for which we really care. I do not at all want to see games diminished, or played with less keenness. I only desire to see them duly subordinated. I do not think it ought to be considered slightly eccentric for a boy to care very much about his work, or to take an interest in books. I should like it to be recognized at schools that the only quality that was admirable was keenness, and that it was admirable in whatever department it was displayed; but nowadays keenness about games is considered admirable and heroic, while keenness about work or books is considered slightly grovelling and priggish.

The same spirit has affected what is called sport. People no longer look upon it as an agreeable interlude, but as a business in itself; they will not accept invitations to shoot, unless the sport is likely to be good; a moderate performer with the gun is treated as if it was a crime for him to want to shoot at all; then the motoring craze has come in upon the top of the golfing craze; and all the spare time of people of leisure tends to be filled up with bridge. The difficulty in dealing with the situation is that the thing itself is not only not wrong, but really beneficial; it is better to be occupied than to be idle, and it is hard to preach against a thing which is excellent in moderation and only mischievous in excess.

Personally I am afraid that I only look upon games as a *pis-aller*. I would always rather take a walk than play golf, and read a book than play bridge. Bridge, indeed, I should regard as only one degree better than absolutely vacuous conversation, which is certainly the most fatiguing thing in the world. But the odd thing is that while it is regarded as rather vicious to do nothing, it is regarded as positively virtuous to play a game. Personally I think competition always a more or less disagreeable thing. I dislike it in real life, and I do not see why it should be introduced into one's amusements. If it amuses me to do a thing, I do not very much care whether I do it better than another person. I have no desire to be always comparing my skill with the skill of others.

Then, too, I am afraid that I must confess to a lamentably feeble pleasure in mere country sights

and sounds. I love to watch the curious and beautiful things that go on in every hedgerow and every field; it is a ceaseless delight to see the tender uncrumpling leaves of the copse in spring, and no less a pleasure to see the woodland streaked and stained with the flaming glories of autumn. It is a joy in high midsummer to see the clear dwindled stream run under the thick hazels, among the lush water-plants; it is no less a joy to see the same stream running full and turbid in winter, when the banks are bare, and the trees are leafless, and the pasture is wrinkled with frost. Half the joy, for instance, of shooting, in which I frankly confess I take a childish delight, is the quiet tramping over the clean-cut stubble, the distant view of field and wood, the long, quiet wait at the covert-end, where the spindle-wood hangs out her quaint rosy berries, and the rabbits come scampering up the copse, as the far-off tapping of the beaters draws near in the frosty air. The delights of the countryside grow upon me every month and every year. I love to stroll in the lanes in spring, with white clouds floating in the blue above, and to see the glade carpeted with steel-blue hyacinths. I love to walk on country roads or by woodland paths, on a rain-drenched day of summer, when the sky is full of heavy inky clouds, and the earth smells fresh and sweet; I love to go briskly homeward on a winter evening, when the sunset smoulders low in the west, when the pheasants leap trumpeting to their roosts, and the lights begin to peep in cottage windows.

Such joys as these are within the reach of everyone; and to call the country dull because one has not the opportunity of hitting and pursuing a little white



ball round and round among the same fields, with elaborately contrived obstacles to test the skill and the temper, seems to me to be grotesque, if it were not also so distressing.

I cannot help feeling that games are things that are appropriate to the restless days of boyhood, when one will take infinite trouble and toil over anything of the nature of a make-believe, so long as it is understood not to be work; but as one gets older and wiser, a simpler and quieter range of interests ought to take their place. I can humbly answer for it that it need imply no loss of zest; my own power of enjoyment is far deeper and stronger than it was in early years; the pleasures I have described, of sight and sound, mean infinitely more to me than the definite occupations of boyhood ever did. But the danger is that if we are brought up ourselves to depend upon games, and if we bring up all our boys to depend on them, we are not able to do without them as we grow older; and thus we so often have the melancholy spectacle of the elderly man, who is hopelessly bored with existence, and who is the terror of the smoking-room and the dinner-table, because he is only capable of indulging in lengthy reminiscences of his own astonishing athletic performances, and in lamentations over the degeneracy of the human race.

Another remarkable fact about the conventionality that attends games is that certain games are dismissed as childish and contemptible while others are crowned with glory and worship. One knows of eminent clergymen who play golf; and that they should do so seems to constitute so high a title to the

respect and regard with which normal persons view them, that one sometimes wonders whether they do not take up the practice with the wisdom of the serpent that is recommended in the Gospels, or because of the Pauline doctrine of adaptability, that by all means they may save some.

But as far as mere air and exercise goes, the childish game of playing at horses is admirably calculated to increase health and vigour and needs no expensive resources. Yet what would be said and thought if a prelate and his suffragan ran nimbly out of a palace gate in a cathedral close, with little bells tinkling, whips cracking and reins of red ribbon drawn in to repress the curvetting of the gaitered steed? There is nothing in reality more undignified about that than in hitting a little ball about over sandy bunkers. If the Prime Minister and the Lord Chief Justice trundled hoops round and round after breakfast in the gravelled space behind the Horse Guards, who could allege that they would not be the better for the exercise? Yet they would be held for some mysterious reason to have forfeited respect. To the mind of the philosopher all games are either silly or reasonable and nothing so reveals the stupid conventionality of the ordinary mind as the fact that men consider a series of handbooks on Great Bowlers to be a serious and important addition to literature, while they would hold that a little manual on Blind-man's Buff was a fit subject for derision. St. Paul said that when he became a man he put away childish things. He could hardly afford to say that now, if he hoped to be regarded as a man of sense and weight.

I do not wish to be a mere Jeremiah in the region of prophecy, and to deplore, sarcastically and incisively, what I cannot amend. What I rather wish to do is to make a plea for greater simplicity in the matter, and to try and destroy some of the terrible priggishness in the matter of athletics which appears to me to prevail. After all, athletics are only one form of leisurely amusement; and I maintain that it is of the essence of priggishness to import solemnity into a matter which does not need it, and which would be better without it. Because the tyranny is a real one, the man of many games is not content with simply enjoying them; he has a sense of complacent superiority, and a hardly disguised contempt for the people who do not play them.

I was staying in a house the other day where a distinguished philosopher had driven over to an afternoon call. The call concluded, he wished to make a start, so I went down to the stable with him to see about putting his pony in. The stables were deserted. I was forced to confess that I knew nothing about the harnessing of steeds, however humble. We discovered portions of what appeared to be the equipment of a pony, and I held them for him, while he gingerly tried them on, applying them cautiously to various portions of the innocent animal's person. Eventually we had to give it up as a bad job, and seek for professional assistance. I described the scene for the benefit of a lively lady of my acquaintance, who is a devotee of anything connected with horses, and she laughed unmercifully at the description, and expressed the contempt, which she sincerely felt, in no measured terms. But, after all, it is no part of my busi-

ness to harness horses; it is a convenience that there should be persons who possess the requisite knowledge; for me horses only represent a convenient form of locomotion. I did not mind her being amused—indeed that was the object of my narrative—but her contempt was just as much misplaced as if I had despised her for not being able to tell the difference between sapphics and alcaics, which it was my business to know.

It is the complacency, the self-satisfaction, that results from the worship of games, which is one of its most serious features. I wish with all my heart that I could suggest a remedy for it; but the only thing that I can do is to pursue my own inclinations, with a fervent conviction that they are at least as innocent as the pursuit of athletic exercises; and I can also, as I have said, wave a little flag of revolt, and rally to my standard the quieter and more simple-minded persons, who love their liberty, and decline to part with it unless they can find a better reason than the merely comfortable desire to do what every one else is doing.

## THE SON OF SUCCESS

BY

ARNOLD BENNETT

Father is a successful man. He began with little or nothing—except brains and character. No money, no influence; not much education; and not much luck. He suffered hardship, he fought against odds; but the brains and the character were more powerful than the adverse odds; and father won. He now has a place in the world, and he can wield just the sort of influence which once as a youth he wanted and could not get. He may not be a multi-millionaire, or even a millionaire; but relatively to his original position he is rich and he lives in luxury. No need for him to look twice at sixpence. Being modern, he is not a person to boast unduly about his early struggles, and his friends are seldom wearied by the recital of them. Nevertheless, all his conversation about careers in life implies a firm belief that the self-made man is the best made man. He is convinced that hardship brings out the true quality of the young, teaches them to rely on themselves, and fosters grit, perseverance, industry and resourcefulness as nothing else can.

But father has a son, and the responsibility is his of launching that son upon the world. At first his course is plain; there can be no argument or uncertainty about it. Son must be educated. Father

was not educated ; but this is an age of education, and not to have son educated in the finest possible way would be a crime against son and against society. Accordingly, son is educated in what father considers to be the finest possible way. The advantage to son is immense, and father would be more than human if he did not occasionally remark, either about son or directly to son : “ I never had such an advantage.”

Well, so far so good. But now, as son's education is approaching completion, comes father's bad time—the time when father hesitates to the point of trembling in his five-guinea boots, blushes at the mere mention of the word “hardship,” and wonders secretly what in the dickens he is going to do in regard to son. Shall he put his favourite “hardship” theory of a career into practice, or shall he not ? If his convictions are genuine convictions and he has the courage of them, he will say to son : “ Listen, son ! I have given you the supreme advantage of a first-rate education. I shall do no more for you, because if I did more I should be doing you harm and spoiling your chances of making the best of yourself. In order to make the best of yourself you must depend not on me but on yourself. You must fight your own battle. Do not ask me for influence or for capital. I will give you advice and nothing else. You may think me cruel. But I am only cruel to be kind. One day you will be grateful to me. Here is fifty pounds for immediate necessities, and there is the front door. Go forth.”

Thus and thus should be his attitude to son. But, after all, father's course is not quite so plain as

all that. To begin with, father has accustomed son to luxury, whereas father himself, when young, simply did not know what luxury was. Hardships were naught to father; they would be absolute torture and misery to son. Again, son may not have the fundamental forceful character with which heaven endowed father. Son might founder where father grandly breasted the waves. And, in the third place, father may well have a business or profession from which he is ready to retire, and which indeed is all ready-made and waiting for son. Is the business or profession to be thrown away for lack of a successor? And there are many other considerations. For example, the feelings of mother.

So the result is that in offices and manufactories one sees relatively large numbers of young men who may be called "fathers' sons." These fathers' sons are on velvet, which they have not paid for. They may, in rare instances, soon prove that they possess character and ability worthy of the velvet and strong enough to treat the velvet as though it were a bare board. Or they may just be able to conduct themselves with decency and without humiliation, maintaining fairly well, but not enhancing, the position into which good luck has thrust them. Or they may be simply ridiculous by reason either of idleness, incompetence, or essential weakness of disposition. In either case, but especially in the second and third cases, their occupation of the precious velvet will cause considerable secret resentment among the less fortunate beings with whom they work. Their mere existence will arouse the sense of injustice, will emphasise the general discontents of society, and most

infallibly in some degree make for inefficiency all round.

The question arises : What can be done about it ? The answer to this question is : Not much. Father, abetted by mother, will nearly always " spoil " son. And if he doesn't the consequences are likely to be just as evil as if he did—evil, in that they will certainly embitter family life. When father inhabits Belgrave-square, or even Bedford-square, and keeps two automobiles, while son, either living under father's roof or in lodgings, has to manage on what he earns as a beginner, son will revile father in his heart and, however brilliantly he succeeds by his own unaided efforts, his ire against father will not be lessened one jot. Moreover, the theory that early hardships are an aid to success is only half true. They may be an aid, but they may also be a drawback. Many men have failed utterly under hardships, who might have succeeded tolerably well in circumstances less trying and more comfortable.

Further, it is contrary to the common sense of mankind that son should be forced back to the point at which father started. The progress of humanity at large will not be achieved by rolling a stone uphill, throwing it back to the bottom, and then once more rolling it up again, and so on, ad infinitum. Father himself has probably not reached the summit of Mount Everest. Heights yet remain for son to conquer ; and, whatever his unearned advantages, he may find it just as difficult to climb from ten thousand feet to twenty thousand feet as father found it to climb from ten feet to ten thousand feet.



General character and ability "will out". If son possesses them he will somehow demonstrate the fact, despite being "spoiled". If he doesn't—well, then, it is a pity that he should occupy any velvet; but parental affection also "will out"—and parental affection means velvet for children; and who among you would advocate the strangling of parental affection? However, if father cannot do much to nullify the bad effects of bestowing influence, opportunity or capital on son, he can at any rate do something. And, chiefly, he ought to measure out the size and the soft thickness of the velvet according to son's keenness and natural gifts. If son is not keen, then he should be allotted as small an allowance of velvet as possible, for over-liberality in velvet will soon rob him of what bit of keenness he has. On the other hand, if son is really keen, plenty of velvet will not harm him; it may, indeed, even sharpen his keenness. And the same truth holds good for natural gifts.

Father also must fight against son's delusion—a very common one—that the advantages given to him make it unnecessary for him to work as hard or as thoroughly as ordinary folk. The contrary is the case. Sustained laborious effort is the great antidote for the relaxing poison of special advantages at the start of a career. Sustained laborious effort should be insisted upon as part of the price of such advantages. In this connection I always think of the Swiss hotel proprietor who sends his boy to another hotel and compels him to pass through scullery and the kitchen thereof, and so through waitersdom up to the higher stages of hotel management.

Then there is the problem of son's income during the first year when he earns little or naught. Father, of course, provides such income. Nothing is more likely to undermine son's character, and particularly his self-reliance, than the easy feeling that if he wants money he can get it by asking or wheedling. The income should be moderate, and it should be rigidly limited.

Father should say to son: "Here is the total. It must suffice for all your personal expenditure." Son is pretty certain to come along soon and plead for instance: "A friend of mine is getting married. I must give him a wedding present and I've nothing in hand." Whereupon father will reply: "Your wedding presents are your affair, not mine. What should you do if you were a clerk with a fixed salary and no father?" Says son: "But what am I to do?" Says father: "If you have no money you can't scatter presents." Says son: "But I simply must. It would look so odd." Says father: "Let it look odd. This will teach you in your financial arrangements to provide a margin for emergencies." In this manner and in no other manner can son learn "the value of money." By such training alone can son's moral stamina be encouraged and strengthened, and the common reproach of being "his father's son" be taken away.

## THE LITTLE JOYS OF MARGARET

BY

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

Margaret had seen her five sisters one by one leave the family nest to set up little nests of their own. Her brother, the eldest child of a family of seven, had left the old home almost beyond memory and settled in London. Now and again he made a flying visit to the small provincial town of his birth, and sometimes he sent two little daughters to represent him—for he was already a widowed man and relied occasionally on the old roof-tree to replace the lost mother. Margaret had seen what sympathetic spectators called her “fate” slowly approaching for sometime—particularly when, five years ago, she had broken off her engagement with a worthless boy. She had loved him deeply, and, had she loved him less, a refined girl in the provinces does not find it easy to replace a discarded suitor—for the choice of young men is not excessive. Her sisters had been more fortunate, and so, as I have said, one by one they left their father's door in bridal veils. But Margaret stayed on, and at length, as had been foreseen, became the sole nurse of a beautiful old invalid mother, a kind of lay sister in the nunnery of home.

She came of a beautiful family. In all the big family of seven there was not one without some kind

of good looks. Two of her sisters were acknowledged beauties, and there were those who considered Margaret the most beautiful of all. It was all the harder, such sympathisers said, that her youth should thus fade over an invalid's couch, the bloom of her complexion be rubbed out by arduous vigils, and the lines prematurely etched in her skin by the strain of a self-denial proper, no doubt, to homely girls and professional nurses, but peculiarly wanton and wasteful in the case of a girl so beautiful as Margaret; |

There are, alas ! a considerable number of women predestined by their lack of personal attractiveness for the humbler tasks of life. Instinctively we associate them with household work, nursing, and the general drudgery of existence. One never dreams of their having a life of their own. They have no accomplishments, nor any of the feminine charms. Women to whom an offer of marriage would seem as terrifying as a comet, they belong to the neutrals of the human hive, and are, practically speaking, only a little higher than the paid domestic. Indeed, perhaps, their one distinction is that they receive no wages.

Now for so attractive a girl as Margaret to be merged in so dreary, undistinguished a class was manifestly preposterous. It was a stupid misapplication of human material. A plainer face and a more homespun fibre would have served the purpose equally well.

Margaret was by no means so much a saint of self-sacrifice as not to have realised her situation, with natural human pangs. Youth only comes once—especially to a woman ; and

No hand can gather up the withered fallen petals  
of the Rose of youth.

Petal by petal, Margaret had watched the rose of her youth fading and falling. More than all her sisters, she was endowed with a zest for existence. Her superb physical constitution cried out for the joy of life. She was made to be a great lover, a great mother; and to her, more than most, the sunshine falling in muffled beams through the lattices of her mother's sick-room came with a maddening summons to live. She was so supremely fitted to play a triumphant part in the world outside there, so gay of heart, so victoriously vital.

At first, therefore, the renunciation, accepted on the surface with so kind a face, was a source of secret bitterness and hidden tears. But time, with its mercy of compensation, had worked for her one of its many mysterious transmutations, and shown her of what fine gold her apparently leaden days were made. She was now thirty-three; though, for all her nursing vigils, she did not look more than twenty-nine, and was now more than resigned to the loss of the peculiar opportunities of youth—if, indeed, they could be said to be lost already. "An old maid," she would say, "who has cheerfully made up her mind to be an old maid, is one of the happiest, and indeed, most enviable, people in all the world."

Resent the law as we may, it is none the less true that renunciation brings with it a mysterious initiation, a finer insight. Its discipline would seem to refine and temper our organs of spiritual perception, and thus

make up for the commoner experience lost by a rarer experience gained. By dedicating herself to her sick mother, Margaret undoubtedly lost much of the average experience of her sex and age, but almost imperceptibly it had been borne in upon her that she made some important gains of a finer kind. She had been brought very close to the mystery of human life, closer than those who have nothing to do beyond being thoughtlessly happy can ever come. The nurse and the priest are initiates of the same knowledge. Each alike is a sentinel on the mysterious frontier between this world and the next. The nearer we approach that frontier, the more we understand, not only of that world on the other side, but of the world on this. It is only when death throws its shadow over the page of life that we realise the full significance of what we are reading. Thus, by her mother's bedside, Margaret was learning to read the page of life under the illuminating shadow of death.

But, apart from any such mystical compensation Margaret's great reward was that she knew her beautiful old mother better than any one else in the world knew her. As a rule, and particularly in a large family, parents remain half mythical to their children, awe-inspiring presences in the home, colossal figures of antiquity, about whose knees the younger generation crawls and gropes, but whose heads are hidden in the mists of pre-historic legend. They are like personages in the Bible. They impress our imagination, but we cannot think of them as being quite real. Their histories smack of legend. And this of course, is natural ; for they had been in the world, had loved and suffered, so long before us that they

seem a part of that ante-natal mystery out of which we sprang. When they speak of their old love-stories, it is as though we were reading Homer. It sounds so long ago. We are surprised at the vividness with which they recall happenings and personalities past and gone before, as they tell us, we were born. Before we were born! Yes! They belong to that mysterious epoch of time—"before we were born"; and unless we have a taste for history, or are drawn close to them by some sympathetic human exigency, as Margaret had been drawn to her mother, we are too apt, in the stress of making our own, to regard the history of our parents as dry-as-dust.

As the old mother sits there so quiet in her corner, her body worn to a silver thread, and hardly anything left of her but her indomitable eyes; it is hard, at least for a young thing of nineteen, all aflush and aflurry with her new party gown, to realise that that old mother is infinitely more romantic than herself. She has sat there so long, perhaps, as to have come to seem part of the inanimate furniture of home, rather than a living being. Well! the young thing goes to her party, and dances with some callow youth who pays her clumsy compliments, and Margaret remains at home with the old mother in her corner. It is hard on Margaret! Yes; and yet, as I have said, it is thus she comes to know her old mother better than any one else knows her—society perhaps not so poor an exchange for that of smart, immature young men of one's own age.

As the door closes behind the important rustle of youthful laces, and Margaret and her mother are

left alone, the mother's old eyes light up with an almost mischievous smile. If age seems humorous to youth, youth is even more humorous to age.

"It is evidently a great occasion, Peg," the old voice says, with the suspicion of a gentle mockery, "Don't you wish you were going?"

"You naughty old mother!" answers Margaret, going over and kissing her.

The two understand each other.

"Well, shall we go on with our book?" says the mother, after a while.

"Yes, dear, in a moment. I have first to get you your diet, and then we can begin."

"Bother the diet!" says the courageous old lady; "for two pins I'd go to the ball myself. That old taffeta silk of mine is old enough to be in fashion again. What do you say, Peg, if you and I go to the ball together?"

"O! it's too much trouble dressing, mother. What do you think?"

"Well, I suppose it is," answers the mother. "Besides, I want to hear what happens next to those two beautiful young people in our book. So be quick with my old diet, and come and read."

There is perhaps nothing so lovely, or so well worth having, as the gratitude of the old towards the young that care to give them more than the perfunctory ministrations to which they have long since grown



sadly accustomed. There was no reward in the world that Margaret would have exchanged for the sweet looks of her old mother, who, being no merely selfish invalid, knew the value and the cost of the devotion her daughter was giving her.

"I can give you so little, my child, for all you are giving me," her mother would sometimes say; and the tears would spring to Margaret's eyes.

Yes! Margaret had her reward in this alone—that she had cared to decipher the lined old document of her mother's face. Her other sisters had passed it by more or less impatiently. It was like some ancient manuscript in a museum, which only a loving and patient scholar takes the trouble to read. But the moment you begin to pick out the words, how its crabbed text blossoms with beautiful meanings and fascinating messages! It is as though you threw a dried rose into some magic water, and saw it unfold and take on bloom and fill with perfume, and bring back the nightingale that sang to it so many years ago. So Margaret loved her mother's old face, and learned to know the meaning of every line on it. Privileged to see that old face in all its private moments of feeling, under the transient revivification of deathless memories, she was able, so to say, to reconstruct its perished beauty and realise the romance of which it was once the alluring candle. For her mother had been a very great beauty, and if, like Margaret, you are able to see it, there is no history so fascinating as the bygone love-affairs of old people. How much more fascinating to read one's mother's love-letters than one's own!

Even in the history of the heart recent events have a certain crudity, and love itself seems the more romantic for having lain in lavender for fifty years. A certain style, a certain distinction, beyond question go with antiquity, and to spend your days with a refined old mother is no less an education in style and distinction than to spend them in the air of old cities, under the shadow of august architecture, and in the sunset of classic paintings.

The longer Margaret lived with her old mother, the less she valued the so-called "opportunities" she had missed. Coming out of her mother's world of memories, there seemed something small, even common, about the younger generation to which she belonged—something lacking in significance and dignity.

For example, it had been her dream, as it is the dream of every true woman, to be a mother herself: and yet, somehow—though she would not admit it in so many words—when her young married sisters came with their babies, there was something about their bustling and complacent domesticity that seemed to make maternity bourgeois. She had not dreamed of being a mother like that. She was convinced that her old mother had never been a mother like that. "They seem more like wet-nurses than mothers," she said to herself, with her wicked wit.

Was there, she asked herself, something in realisation that inevitably lost you the dream? Was to incarnate an ideal to materialise it? Did the finer spirit of love necessarily evaporate like some volatile essence with marriage? Was it better to

remain an idealistic spectator such as she—than to run the risks of realisation ?

She was far too beautiful, and had declined too many offers of commonplace marriage, for such questioning to seem the philosophy of disappointment. Indeed, the more she realised her own situation, the more she came to regard what others considered her sacrifices to her mother as a safe-guard against the risk of a mediocre domesticity. Indeed, she began to feel a certain pride, as of a priestess, in the conservation of the dignity of her nature. It is better to be a vestal virgin than—some mothers.

And, after all, the maternal instinct of her nature found an ideal outlet in her brother's children—the two little mother-less girls, who came every year to spend their holidays with their grandmother and their aunt Margaret.

Margaret had seen but little of their mother, but her occasional glimpses of her had left her with a haloed image of a delicate, spiritual face that grew more and more Madonna-like with memory. The nimbus of the Divine Mother, as she herself had dreamed of her, had seemed indeed to illumine that grave young face.

It pleased her imagination to take the place of that phantom mother, herself—a phantom mother. And who knows but that such dream-children, as she called those two little girls, were more satisfactory in the end than real children ? They represented, so to say, the poetry of children. Had Margaret been a real mother, there would have been the

prose of children as well. But here, as in so much else, Margaret's seclusion from the responsible activities of the outside world enabled her to gather the fine flower of existence without losing the sense of it in the cares of its cultivation. I think that she comprehended the wonder and joy of children more than if she had been a real mother.

Seclusion and renunciation are great sharpeners and refiners of the sense of joy, chiefly because they encourage the habit of attentiveness.

"Our excitements are very tiny," once said the old mother to Margaret, "therefore we make the most of them."

"I don't agree with you, mother," Margaret had answered. "I think it is theirs that are tiny—trivial indeed, and ours that are great. People in the world lose the values of life by having too much choice; too much choice—of things not worth having. This makes them miss the real things—just as any one living in a city cannot see the stars for the electric lights. But we, sitting quiet in our corner, have time to watch and listen when the others must hurry by. We have time, for instance, to watch that sunset yonder, whereas some of our worldly friends would be busy dressing to go out to a bad play. We can sit here and listen to that bird singing his vespers as long as he will sing—and personally I wouldn't exchange him for a prima donna. Far from being poor in excitements, I think we have quite as many as are good for us, and those we have are very beautiful and real."

"You are a brave child," answered her mother. "Come and kiss me," and she took the beautiful gold

head into her hands and kissed her daughter with her sweet old mouth, so lost among wrinkles that it was sometimes hard to find it.

"But am I not right, mother?" said Margaret.

"Yes! you are right, dear, but you seem too young to know such wisdom."

"I have to thank you for it, darling," answered Margaret, bending down and kissing her mother's beautiful grey hair.

"Ah! little one," replied the mother, "it is well to be wise, but it is good to be foolish when we are young—and I fear I have robbed you of your foolishness."

"I shall believe you have if you talk like that," retorted Margaret, laughingly taking her mother into her arms and gently shaking her, as she sometimes did when the old lady was supposed to have been "naughty."

So for Margaret and her mother the days pass, and at first, as we have said, it may seem a dull life, and even a hard one, for Margaret. But she herself has long ceased to think so, and she dreads the inevitable moment when the divine friendship between her and her old mother must come to an end. She knows, of course, that it must come, and that the day cannot be far off when the weary old limbs will refuse to make the tiny journeys from bedroom to rocking-chair which have long been all that has been demanded of them; when the brave, humorous old eyes will be so weary that they cannot keep open any more

in this world. The thought is one that is insupportably lonely, and sometimes she looks at the invalid chair, at the cup and saucer in which she served her mother's simple food, at the medicine-bottle and the measuring-glass, at the knitted shawl which protects the frail old form against draughts, and at all such sad furniture of an invalid's life, and pictures the day when the homely, affectionate use of all these things will be gone forever ; for so poignant is humanity that it sanctifies with endearing associations even objects in themselves so painful and prosaic. And it seems to Margaret that when that day comes, it would be most natural for her to go on the same journey with her mother —and still be her loving nurse in Paradise !

For who shall fill for her her mother's place on earth —and what occupation will be left for Margaret when her “ beautiful old *raison d'être*,” as she sometimes calls her mother, has entered into the sleep of the blessed ? She seldom thinks of that, for the thought is too lonely, and, meanwhile, she uses all her love and care to make this earth so attractive and cosy that the beautiful mother-spirit, who has been so long prepared for her short journey to heaven, may be tempted to linger here yet a little while longer. These ministrations, which began as a kind of renunciation, have now turned into an unselfish selfishness. Margaret began by feeling herself necessary to her mother ; now her mother becomes more and more necessary to Margaret. Sometimes when she leaves her alone for a few moments in her chair, she laughingly bends over and says, “ Promise me that you won't run away to heaven while my back is turned.”

And the old mother smiles one of those transfigured smiles which seem only to light up the faces of those that are already half over the border of the spiritual world.

Winter is, of course, Margaret's time of chief anxiety, and then her efforts are redoubled to detain her beloved spirit in an inclement world. Each winter passed in safety seems a personal victory over death. How anxiously she watches for the first sign of the returning spring, how eagerly she brings the news of early blade and bud, and, with the first violet, she feels that the danger is over for another year. When the spring is so afire that she is able to fill her mother's lap with a fragrant heap of crocus and daffodil, she dares at last to laugh and say :

"Now confess, mother, that you won't find sweeter flowers even in heaven."

And when the thrush is on the apple bough outside the window, Margaret will sometimes employ the same gentle raillery.

"Do you think, mother," she will say, "that an angel could sing sweeter than that thrush?"

"You seem very sure, Margaret, that I am going to heaven," the old mother will sometimes say, with one of her arch old smiles; "but do you know that I stole two pepper-mints yesterday?"

"You did!" says Margaret.

"I did, indeed!" answers the mother, "and they have been on my conscience ever since."

“ Really, mother ! I don’t know what to say,” answers Margaret. “ I had no idea that you are so wicked.”

Many such little games the two play together, as the days go by ; and often at bedtime, as Margaret tucks her mother into bed, she asks her :

“ Are you comfortable, dear ? Do you really think you would be much more comfortable in heaven ? ”

Or sometimes she will draw aside the window-curtain and say :

“ Look at the stars, mother. . . . . Don’t you think we get the best view of them down here ? ”

So it is that Margaret persuades her mother to delay her journey a little while.



## AGRA AND THE TAJ

BY

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

It would be difficult to find a railway station anywhere which lands its passengers upon a more remarkable scene than that at Agra. You emerge into the open space amid the usual brightly clad crowd, and are arrested on the step of the carriage by the imposing spectacle presented upon either hand. To the right soar the minarets and domes of an immense mosque, the Jumma Musjid of the City built by Shah Jahan, in A. D. 1644, in honour of the good princess Jahanara, his daughter, who was buried at Delhi, after sharing the seven years' captivity of her father, deposed by Aurungzebe. This is a massive structure of sandstone, the great domes of which are diversified by a zigzag pattern in layers of white marble, producing a strange but picturesque effect; and to the left the vast red walls and bastions of Akbar's Fort climb upwards like sea-cliffs, facing the station with a huge battlemented gateway, and with long lines of crenulated parapet, under which runs in a broad stream, divided by many sandbanks, the sacred Yamuna, or Jumna, flowing grandly down to join the Ganges, and forming with that river the fertile Doab, the fairest portion of Hindustan proper.

Within these lofty walls are hidden, as the traveller will well know, the finest monuments of the Mogul

time, as well as some of the favourite retreats of the sultans ; and it is right that the first object to seize attention at Akbar's city should remind one of that truly great sovereign, whose tolerance and rare artistic taste created, what may be called, the new school of Hindustani architecture. Akbar loved India. The hearts of Babur and Humayun were always away in Central Asia, where one of them died ; but the son of Hamida, the Persian girl, born at Umarkot on the Indus, who began to rule as a boy of fourteen, and lived to prove so powerful a monarch, knew no country except his empire of Hindustan, and gave himself, heart and soul, to the idea of blending in India conquerors and conquered into one people. It is notable that the Hindus believed him to be one of their own people returned to earth, and all the more when one day he dug up at the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges the dish, the bottle, and deer-skin of an anchorite ; articles which they supposed must have appertained to the Emperor in a previous existence. He chose Hindu princesses for his wives ; favoured and cultivated Hindu literature, albeit he himself could neither read nor write ; took Hindu statesmen into his deepest confidence, and by employing Hindu artists and masons, and giving them free play upon the old conventional Persian and Mogul models, he founded for India what comes nearest to a national style of building, wherein her old delicate skill of detailed ornament has mingled with the original strength of the invader's designs, so that, even now, many a graceful private mansion or forgotten temple in the by-streets of Indian cities proves how thoroughly Hindustani architecture is a living art.

The breadth of Akbar's religious views, his generous interest in all forms of thought, his love of the many good qualities in his Indian subjects, and his dislike of the bigotry and fierceness of his own Mogul countrymen ; the grace, the joyfulness, the courage, and the kindliness of the man, until those later years when the vices of his children disheartened him and his strong nature yielded, make Agra a veritable place of pilgrimage for those who remember Akbar's virtues and overlook his faults.

He even invented a reconciling religion. Mr. Keene says : ' The so-called " Divine Monotheism " of Akbar was an attempt to throw off the rules of Islam, and substitute an eclectic system obtained by putting together the systems of Zoroaster, of the Brahmans, and of Christianity, and retaining some Mohammedan forms. Few leading Moslems and only one Hindu (Birbal) embraced it ; and it fell at the death of its founder, owing to the opposition of sincere believers and the indifference of the new Emperor Jahangir. But the Hindus continued to prosper till the time of Aurungzebe. Of Akbar's peers fifty-seven were Hindus out of about four hundred ; under his grandson Shah Jahan, out of six hundred and nine, one hundred and ten were Hindus. Neither Akbar nor Jahangir converted their Hindu wives to the faith of Islam '. Faults, the great Emperor certainly had. His city of Fatehpur-Sikri, built at enormous cost to his people, in a place where no man could live long because of the bad air and water, was a caprice so costly as to seem cruel ; and beautiful as are the buildings in this city and at Delhi, due to his hand or to his influence, who has not heard of that fatal sweetmeat box which

the Emperor carried, one side of which contained innocent pastilles of honey and almonds, and the other partition sweet-scented lozenges imbued with deadly poison? If Akbar gave you a bonbon from the kind side of his box you were in high favour at court and likely to command a province soon or to receive the charge of five thousand horse. If he smilingly offered you one from the other part you could not refuse—for none dared to say ‘No!’ to Akbar—and your mouth for a while became full of the fragrance of nard and myrrh, while you rode hurriedly home in your litter, and there died before the golden palace robes could well be stripped off. They say that Akbar himself perished by making a mistake one evening when he wished for a sweetmeat. . . . Our first duty was, of course, to visit the Taj, and the next was to see the tomb where the dust of Akbar the Magnificent lies. The site of the Emperor’s burial is called Sikandra, and is distant about five miles from the Fort Gate. It is approached by a super-archway of red sandstone, massive and majestic, crowned with great scrolls of Arabic, being the ‘Chapter of the Kingdom’ from the Koran. The white marble minarets on either side are broken, and broken is the patterned pavement by which you pass through a large but melancholy garden to the mausoleum of the Emperor. This is a vast mosque-like structure of red sandstone, diversified with marbles of many colours, having an imposing central entrance, and on each side of this main arch five smaller archways. Large flowers and bold arabesques run along the architraves, inlaid in brilliant hues. The entrance-chamber was originally vaulted with diapers, of blue and gold, the splendid effect of

which may be judged by a small portion which has been recently renovated. By this grand approach you are led to the highest of four platforms, where, in the centre of a square upper pavilion, surrounded by lattice-work of wonderful pierced marble, the cenotaph of the Emperor stands. On one side of this monument are written in Arabic the words with which he used to be saluted, *Allahu Akbar*—‘God is Great,’ and on the other those with which he was wont to reply to his obsequious courtiers, *Jalla jalla-laku*—‘May His glory be glorified.’ A yard or so from the monument rises a marble pillar, which was formerly coated with gold plates, and provided with a receptacle in which the Koh-i-Noor was kept. Around this central shrine, at the base of the edifice, are many little chapels, where similar but humbler memorials exist to other members of the Imperial line, among them a daughter of Aurungzebe. But to see where Akbar’s dust really reposes you must come down from the proud and lofty pavilion, and the beautiful white corridors lighted of old with that great diamond, and by the Indian sunshine filtering upon it through those pierced panels; you must descend a gloomy subterranean slope paved with black flagstones, steep and rugged, and rapidly retreating from the glad warmth of the Indian morning outside into chilly shadows. This brings you to a dismal vaulted chamber, of conical form, a huge sepulchral cellar, which has no touch of defunct royalty about it, except some faint vestiges of gold and blue upon the roof, dimly illuminated by one square aperture. In the middle of the floor is thus perceived a white tombstone, the high polish of which catches what little light flickers

about the place. This plain marble bears no inscription whatever ; only on the top of it is seen the Kalamdan carved upon a man's grave-slab by the Moguls. And under this simple stone lie the bones of Akbar the Magnificent, in a darkness which daylight was wont to penetrate only once a year in the old Imperial days. Now the place is always open to visitors ; but the Khadim in charge had reverently set a tumbler of flowers on the Mecca side of the grave, and spoke in a whisper, as if the mighty Akbar might still hear and resent any want of obeisance.

The Fort, already spoken of, contains within its vast red walls a whole town of splendid Mogul buildings. They are grouped together in a rich profusion of architecture not to be understood, unless it is remembered that the Mogul was a man of camps, and imitated in walled cities his own bygone habits of the desert. Thus, alike at Fatehpur-Sikri and this wonderful Agra Fort, edifice is crowded upon edifice within a narrow space, just as tents would have been in a Bactrian encampment. Moreover, the general design is virtually the same. The Dewan-i-Am, which you first see, with its three rows of thirty-six columns fronting the sunlight, where the place of the throne is still marked ; the Dewan-i-Khas, a marvel of elaborate work, carved and beautified beyond the power of any words to convey ; the Jahangir Mahal, and the beautiful mosques themselves, the Nagina and the Moti, all suggest tents and tent-poles and the Kanauts or curtains of tents lifted high for light and air. These buildings are, in fact, all open halls, facing with tent-like fronts the square or the river on one side, and having secret apartments

or recesses at the back, like the women's portion of a Turanian Kibitka. But, of course, from the most sumptuous green silk tent of Timur to the least of all these lovely edifices at Agra, Delhi, or Fatehpur-Sikri, is a longer step than from the lowest Mongol camp-follower to Akbar's intellect and capacity. The Dewan-i-Khas, with its embroidered arches and pilasters and its inlaying of jewel-work, would alone suffice to render any city famous. Yet this is only one of the many treasures enshrined in the fortalice of Akbar. You pass from the columned grace and lightness of the Hall of Audience, upon a terrace overlooking the broad channel of the Jumna, with the snow-white domes of the Taj showing in the distance. Close to the balustrade of this terrace is placed a broad and solid slab of black stone, on which the throne of Akbar was set, while he administered justice to the crowds of his people assembled in the courtyard below. The stone is cracked right across, and there are rusty-red stains upon it, due, no doubt, to some ferreous oxide in the marble. The Khadim, however, tells you that the seat of the Emperor broke spontaneously and in indignation when the Jat usurper first sat there ; and that the gout of blood appeared on it because of his tyranny. Close at hand, approached by hidden passages, is the Muchchi Bhawan, a quadrangle of marble kiosks and pavilions, the central hollow of which was once filled with water and stocked with gold and silver fish ; and there is a pretty open turret, with satin-white seats and pierced windows, from which the lovely ladies of the Court were wont to angle.

Yet again you wander, by a corridor of marble and some shining steps, by once-secret bowers of the

zenana and bath-rooms, cool in the hottest noon, to a pair of brazen gates, spoil brought by Akbar from Chittore ; and these admit the delighted visitor to a small, secluded mosque, dedicated to the use of those same lovely queens and odalisques of the Great Mogul for their daily devotions. Here is the Nagina, or 'Gem'—all of white marble, and delicately beautiful enough for the knees of the sweetest and stateliest of votaries. But it is seed-pearl only to the Great Pearl adjoining, the famous Moti Musjid, the edifice which is a fair and perfect sister to Shah Jahan's other consummate work, the Taj Mahal. A heavy door of carved timber is thrust open by the Khadim, and you stand in a Muslim shrine, where only two colours are needed by the artist who would endeavour to depict it—the blue of the enroofing sky and the silvery white of the surrounding alabaster. All is sapphire and snow ; a sanctuary without any ornament except its own supreme and spotless beauty of surface and material. The milky cupolas crown the place of prayer, approached by milk-white steps from the white enclosure, in the middle of which opens a marble tank, within the waters whereof the fifty-eight white pillars of the cloister glass their delicate twelve-sided shafts and capitals of subtle device. It is not quite exact to write that this Pearl of all Churches has no embellishment. Passages from the Koran are inscribed over some of the doorways and engrailed arches, in flowing Arabic, wrought of black marble, deftly inlaid upon the tender purity of the alabaster. The delicate stone itself has here and there tints of rose colour, of pale amber, and of faint blue, and is carved on many a panel and pilaster into soft fancies of spray and flower, scroll and arabesque. These



slight variations' from the prevailing pureness of the surface, however, no more mar the unsullied appearance of the mosque, than the meandering veins, the flush of the blood, and the shadows of the warm flesh impair the whiteness of a beautiful woman's body :

' Cool, as to tread in summer-time on snows,  
It was to loiter there.'

In 1857 this divine retreat was used by the European refugees as an Hospital and one would think that the wildest delirium of the sick or the wounded must have been calmed into peace by an asylum so quiet, so tender, and so solemn.

In the south-east angle of this palace-crowded Fort they use also, as military cells, the Baoli, or Well-Room, and the other basement apartments where-to the Emperor and his ladies would retreat when the fierce heats of the Indian midsummer had wearied him of state, and them of prayer in the mosque, or of bargains with the silk-merchant's slaves in the Muchchi-Bhawun. 'Descending,' we are told, 'at early morning and followed by attendants with fruits and music, the royal party could wander about the labyrinths that honeycomb the fort in this direction, whose windows look on the river at the base of the palace. Arriving at the Baoli they could seat themselves on cushions in the chambers that surrounded the water of the well, and idle away the sultry hours in the manner dwelt on by Persian poets.'

If, indeed, one would realise the pomp and luxury of this ancient Mogul Court, a very just idea may

be gained from M. Bernier's account, who visited Agra during the reign of Shah Jahan. In a letter to M. dela Mothe le Vayer, dated July 1, 1663, contemporaneously translated, the Frenchman writes :

‘ The King appeared sitting upon his throne, in the bottom of the great hall of the Am-Kas, splendidly appressed. His vest was of white satin, flowered and raised with a very fine embroidery of gold and silk. His turban was of cloth of gold, having a fowl wrought upon it like a heron, whose foot was covered with diamonds of an extraordinary bigness and price, with a great Oriental topaz, which may be said to be matchless shining like a little sun. A collar of big pearls hung about his neck down to his stomach, after the manner that some heathens wear here their great beads. His throne was supported by six high pillars, or feet, said to be of massive gold, and set with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. I am not able to tell you aright neither the number nor the price of this heap of precious stones, because it is not permitted to come near enough to count them, and to judge of their water and purity. Only this I can say, that the big diamonds are there in confusion, and that the throne is estimated to be worth four kouroures of roupies, if I remember well. I have said elsewhere that a roupie is almost equivalent to half-a-crown, a lecque to a hundred thousand roupies, and a kourour to a hundred lecques ; so that the throne is valued forty millions of roupies, which are worth about sixty millions of French livres. That which I find upon it best devised are two peacocks covered with precious stones and pearls. Beneath this throne there appeared all the Omrahs in splendid apparel upon a raised ground covered

with a great canopy of purfled gold with great golden fringes, and enclosed by a silver balistre. The pillars of the hall were hung with tapestries of purfled gold, having the ground of gold; and for the roof of the hall there was nothing but great canopies of flowered satin fastened with red silken cords that had big tufts of silk mixed with threads of gold hanging on them. Below there was nothing to be seen but great silken tapestries, very rich, of an extraordinary length and breadth. In the court there was set abroad a curtain tent as long and large as the hall and more. It was joined to the hall by the upper part, and reached almost as far as to the middle of the court; meantime, it was all inclosed by a great balister covered with plates of silver. It was supported by three pillars, being of the thickness and height of a bargemast, and by some lesser ones, and they all were covered with plates of silver. It was red from without and lined within with those fine chittes, or cloth painted by a pencil of Masulipatam, purposely wrought and contrived with such vivid colours, and flowers so naturally drawn of a hundred several fashions and shapes, that one would have said it were an hanging parterre. Thus was the great hall of the Am-Kas adorned and set out. As to those 'arched galleries which I have spoken of that are round about the Courts, each Omrah had received order to dress them at his own charges; and, they now striving who should make his own most stately, there was seen nothing but purfled gold above and beneath, and rich tapestries under foot.'

Yet, all this while, nothing has been written of the Wonder of Agra, and the 'Crown of the World'—

then sighed. They seemed of all ages and all types ; from her who looked like a peasant of Provence, broad, brown, and strong, to the weariest white consumptive wisp; from old women of seventy, with straggling grey hair, to fifteen-year-old girls. In the cottage forges there would be but one worker, or two at most; in the shop forges four, or even five, little glowing heaps ; four or five of the grimy, pale lung-bellows; and never a moment without a fiery hook about to take its place on the growing chains, never a second when the thin smoke of the forges, and of those lives consuming slowly in front of them, did not escape from out of the dingy, white-washed spaces past the dark rafters, away to freedom.

But there had been in the air that morning some thing more than the white sunlight. There had been anticipation. And at two o'clock began fulfilment. The forges were stilled, and from court and alley forth came the women. In their ragged working clothes, in their best clothes—so little different ; in bonnets, in hats, bareheaded, with babies born and unborn, they swarmed into the high street and formed across it behind the band. A strange, magpie, jay-like flock; black, white, patched with brown and green and blue, shifting, chattering, laughing, seeming unconscious of any purpose. A thousand and more of them, with faces twisted and scored by those myriad deformings which a desperate town-toiling and little food fasten on human visages; yet with hardly a single evil or brutal face. Seemingly it was not easy to be evil or brutal on a wage that scarcely bound soul with body. A thousand and more of the poorest-paid and hardest-worked human beings in the world.

On the pavement alongside this strange, acquiescing assembly of revolt, about to march in protest against the conditions of their lives, stood a young woman without a hat and in poor clothes, but with a sort of beauty in her rough-haired, high-cheek-boned, dark-eyed face. She was not one of them; yet by a stroke of Nature's irony, there was graven on her face alone of all those faces, the true look of rebellion; a haughty, almost fierce, uneasy look—an untamed look. On all the other thousand faces, one could see no bitterness, no fierceness, not even enthusiasm; only a half-stolid, half-vivacious patience and eagerness as of children going to a party.

The band played; and they began to march. Laughing, talking, waving flags, trying to keep step; with the same expression slowly but surely coming over every face; the future was not, only the present—this happy present of marching behind the discordance of a brass band; this strange present of crowded movement and laughter in open air.

We others—some dozen accidentals like myself, and the tall, grey-haired lady interested in "the people", together with those few kind spirits in charge of "the show"—marched too, a little self-conscious, desiring with a vague military sensation to hold our heads up, but not too much, under the eyes of the curious bystanders. These—nearly all men—were well-wishers, it was said, though their faces, pale from their own work in shop or furnace, expressed nothing but apathy. They wished well, very dumbly, in the presence of this new thing, as if they found it queer that women should be doing something for themselves; queer and

rather dangerous. A few, indeed, shuffled along between the column and the little hopeless shops and grimy factory sheds, and one or two accompanied their women, carrying the baby. Now and then there passed us some better-to-do citizen—a house-wife, or lawyer's clerk, or iron-monger, with lips pressed rather tightly together and an air of taking no notice of this disturbance of traffic, as though the whole thing were a rather poor joke which they had already heard too often.

So, with laughter and a continual crack of voices our jay-like crew swung on, swaying and stumping in the strange ecstasy of irreflection, happy to be moving, they knew not where, nor greatly why, under the visiting sun, to the sound of murdered music. Whenever the band stopped playing, discipline became a tatterdemalion as the very flags and garments; but never once did they lose that look of essential order, as if indeed they knew that, being the worst-served creatures in the Christian world, they were the chief guardians of the inherent dignity of man.

Hatless, in the very front row, marched a talk slip of a girl, arrow-straight, and so thin, with dirty fair hair, in a blouse and skirt gaping behind, ever turning her pretty face on its pretty slim neck from side to side, so that one could see her blue eyes sweeping here, there, everywhere, with a sort of flower-like wildness, as if a secret embracing of each moment forbade her to let them rest on anything and break this pleasure of just marching. It seemed that in the never-still eyes of that anæmic, happy girl the spirit of our march had elected to enshrine itself and

to make thence its little excursions to each ecstatic follower. Just behind her marched a little old woman—a maker of chains, they said, for forty years—whose black slits of eyes were sparkling, who fluttered a bit of ribbon, and reeled with her sense of the exquisite humour of the world. Every now and then she would make a rush at one of her leaders to demonstrate how immoderately glorious was life. And each time she spoke the woman next to her, laden with a heavy baby, went off into squeals of laughter. Behind her, again, marched one who beat time with her head and waved a little bit of stick intoxicated by this noble music.

For an hour the pageant wound through the dejected street, pursuing neither method nor set route, till it came to a deserted slag-heap, selected for the speech-making. Slowly the motley regiment swung into that grim amphitheatre under the pale sunshine; and, as I watched, a strange fancy visited my brain. I seemed to see over every ragged head of those marching women a little yellow flame, a thin, flickering gleam, spiring upward and blown back by the wind. A trick of the sunlight, may be? Or was it that the life in their hearts, the inextinguishable breath of happiness, had for a moment escaped prison, and was fluttering at the pleasure of the breeze?

Silent now, just enjoying the sound of the words thrown down to them, they stood, unimaginably patient, with that happiness of they knew not what gilding the air above them between the patchwork ribands of their poor flags. If they could not tell very much why they had come, nor believe very much that they would gain anything by coming; if their demonstra-

tion did not mean to the world quite all that oratory would have them think; if they themselves were but the poorest, humblest, least learned women in the land—for all that, it seemed to me that in those tattered, wistful figures, so still, so trustful, I was looking on such beauty as I had never beheld. All the elaborated glory of things made, the perfected dreams of æsthetes, the embroideries of romance, seemed as nothing beside this sudden vision of the wild goodness native in humble hearts.



## BUTTERCUP NIGHT

BY

JOHN GALSWORTHY

Why is it that in some places one has such a feeling of life being, not merely a long picture-show for human eyes, but a single breathing, glowing, growing thing, of which we are no more important a part than the swallows and magpies, the foals and sheep in the meadows, the sycamores and ash trees and flowers in the fields, the rocks, and little bright streams, or even than the long fleecy clouds and their soft-shouting drivers, the winds?

True we register these parts of being, and they—so far as we know—do not register us; yet it is impossible to feel, in such places as I speak of, the busy, dry, complacent sense of being all that matters, which in general we humans have so strongly.

In these rare spots, which are always in the remote country, untouched by the advantages of civilization, one is conscious of an enwrapping web or mist of spirit—is it, perhaps, the glamorous and wistful wraith of all the vanished shapes once dwelling there in such close comradeship?

It was Sunday of an early June when I first came on one such, far down in the West Country. I had walked with my knapsack twenty miles, and there being no room at the tiny inn of the very little village,

they directed me to a wicket gate, through which, by a path leading down a field, I would come to a farm-house, where I might find lodging. The moment I got into that field I felt within me a special contentment, and sat down on a rock to let the feeling grow. In an old holly tree rooted to the bank about fifty yards away two magpies evidently had a nest, for they were coming and going, avoiding my view as much as possible, yet with a certain stealthy confidence which made one feel that they had long prescriptive right to that dwelling-place. Around, far as one could see, was hardly a yard of level ground; all hill and hollow, long ago reclaimed from the moor; and against the distant folds of the hills the farm-house and its thatched barns were just visible, embowered amongst beeches and some dark trees, with a soft bright crown of sunlight over the whole. A gentle wind brought a faint rustling up from those beeches and from a large lime tree which stood by itself; on this wend some little snowy clouds, very high and fugitive in that blue heaven, were always moving over. But I was most struck by the buttercups. Never was field so lighted up by those tiny lamps, those little bright pieces of flower china out of the Great Pottery. They covered the whole ground, as if the sunlight had fallen bodily from the sky, in millions of gold patines; and the fields below as well, down to what was evidently a stream, were just as thick with the extraordinary warmth and glory of them.

Leaving the rock at last, I went towards the house. It was long and low and rather sad, standing in a garden all mossy grass and buttercups, with a few rhododendrons and flowery shrubs below a row of

fine old Irish yews. On the stone verandah a grey sheep-dog and a very small golden-haired child were sitting close together, absorbed in each other. A woman came in answer to my knock, and told me, in a pleasant, soft, slurring voice, that I might stay the night; and dropping my knapsack, I went out again. Through an old gate under a stone arch I came on the farmyard, quite deserted save for a couple of ducks moving slowly down a gutter in the sunlight, and noticing the upper half of a stable-door open, I went across, in search of something living. There, in a rough, loose-box, on thick straw, lay a chestnut, long-tailed mare, with the skin and head of a thoroughbred. She was swathed in blankets, and her face, all cut about the cheeks and over the eyes, rested on an ordinary human's pillow, held by a bearded man in shirt-sleeves, while, leaning against the whitewashed walls, sat fully a dozen other men, perfectly silent, very gravely and intently gazing. The mare's eyes were half-closed and what could be seen of them was dull and bluish, as though she had been through a long time of pain. Save for her rapid breathing, she lay quite still, but her neck and ears were streaked with sweat, and every now and then her hind legs quivered. Seeing me at the door, she raised her head, uttering a queer, half-human noise; but the bearded man at once put his hand on her forehead, and with a "Woa, my dear, woa, my pretty!" pressed it down again, while with the other hand he plumped up the pillow for her cheek. And as the mare obediently let fall her head, one of the men said in a low voice: "I never see anything so like a Christian!" and the others echoed him, in chorus, "Like a Christian—like a Christian!" It went

to one's heart to watch her, and I moved off down the farm lane into an old orchard, where the apple trees were still in bloom, with bees—very small ones—busy on the blossoms, whose petals were dropping on to the dock leaves and buttercups in the long grass. Climbing over the bank at the far end, I found myself in a meadow the like of which—so wild and yet so lush—I think I have never seen. Along one hedge of its meandering length were masses of pink mayflower; and between two little running streams quantities of yellow water iris—"daggers," as they call them—were growing; the "print-frock" orchis, too, was all over the grass, and everywhere the buttercups. Great stones coated with yellowish moss were strewn among the ash trees and dark hollies; and through a grove of beeches on the far side, such as Corot might have painted, a girl was running with a youth after her, who jumped down over the bank and vanished. Thrushes, blackbirds, yaffles, cuckoos, and one other very monotonous little bird were in full song; and this, with the sound of the streams and the wind, and the shapes of the rocks and trees, the colours of the flowers, and the warmth of the sun, gave one a feeling of being lost in a very wilderness of Nature. Some ponies came slowly from the far end, tangled, gypsy-headed little creatures, stared and went off again at speed. It was just one of those places where any day the spirit of all Nature might start up in one of those white gaps that separate the trees and rocks. But though I sat a long time waiting, hoping, Pan did not come.

They were all gone from the stable when I went back to the farm, except the bearded nurse, and one

tall fellow, who might have been the "Dying Gaul," as he crouched there in the straw; and the mare was sleeping—her head between her nurse's knees.

That night I woke at two o'clock, to find it bright as day, almost, with moonlight coming in through the flimsy curtains. And, smitten with the feeling which comes to us creatures of routine so rarely—of what beauty and strangeness we let slip by without ever stretching our hands to grasp it—I got up, dressed, stole downstairs, and out.

Never was such a night of frozen beauty, never such dream-tranquillity. The wind had dropped and the silence was such that one hardly liked to tread even on the grass. From the lawn and fields there seemed to be a mist rising—in truth, the moonlight caught on the dewy buttercups; and across this ghostly radiance the shadows of the yew trees fell in dense black bars. Suddenly I bethought me of the mare. How was she faring, this marvellous night? Very softly opening the door into the yard, I tiptoed across. A light was burning in her box, and I could hear her making the same half-human noise she had made in the afternoon, as if wondering at her feelings; and instantly the voice of the bearded man talking to her as one might talk to a child: "Oover, me darlin'; yu've a been long enough o' that side. Wa-ay, my swate—yu let old Jack turn 'u, then!" Then came a scuffling in the straw, a thud, again that half-human sigh, and his voice: "Put your 'ead to piller, that's my dandy gel. Old Jack wouldn't 'urt 'u; no more'n ef 'u was the Queen!" Then only her quick breathing could be heard and his cough and mutter,

as he settled down once more to his long vigil. I crept very softly up to the window, but she heard me at once; and at the movement of her head the old fellow sat up, blinking his eyes out of the bush of his grizzled hair and beard. Opening the door, I said:

"May I come in?"

"Oo, ay! Come in, zurr, if u'm a mind to."

I sat down beside him on a sack, and for some time we did not speak, taking each other in. One of his legs was lame, so that he had to keep it stretched out all the time; and awfully tired he looked, grey-tired.

"You're a great nurse!" I said at last. "It must be hard work, watching out here all night."

His eyes twinkled; they were of that bright grey kind through which the soul looks out.

"Aw, no!" he said. "Ah, don't grudge it vur a dumb animal. Poor things—they can't 'elp theirzelves. Many's the naight ah've zat up with 'orses and beasts tu. 'Tes en me—can't bear to zee dumb creatures zuffer!" And, laying his hand on the mare's ears: "They zay 'orses 'aven't no souls. 'Tes my belief, they'm gotten souls, zame as us. Many's the Christian ah've seen ain't got the soul of an 'orse. Zame with the beasts—an' the sheep; 'tes only they can't spake their minds."

"And where," I said, "do you think they go to when they die?" He looked at me a little queerly, fancying, perhaps, that I was leading him into some

trap; making sure, too, that I was real stranger, without power over him, body or soul—for humble folk in the country must be careful; then, reassured, and nodding in his bushy beard, he answered knowingly:—

“Ah don’t think they goes zo very far!”

“Why? Do you ever see their spirits?”

“Naw, naw; I never zeen none; but, for all they say, ah don’t think none of us goes such a brave way off. There’s room for all, dead or alive. An’ there’s Christians ah’ve zeen—well, ef they’m not dead for gude, then neither aren’t dumb animals, for sure.”

“And rabbits, squirrels, birds, even insects? How about them?”

He was silent, as if I had carried him a little beyond the confines of his philosophy, then shook his head:

“’Tis all a bit dimsy-like. But yu watch dumb animals, zurr, even the laste littlest one, and yu’ll zee they knows a lot more’n what us thenks; an’ they du’s the things, tu, that putts shame on a man’s often as not. They’ve a got that in ’em as passes show.” And not noticing my stare at that unconscious plagiarism, he added: “Ah’d zuner zet up of a naight with an ’orse than with an ’uman; they’ve more zense and patience.” And stroking the mare’s forehead, he added: “Now my dear, time for yu t’ave yure bottle.”

I waited to see her take her draught, and lay her head down once more on the pillow. Then, hoping he would get a sleep, I rose to go.

"Aw, tes nothin' much," he said, "this time o' year; not like in winter. 'Twill come day before yu know, these buttercup nights;" and twinkling up at me out of his kindly bearded face, he settled himself again into the straw. I stole a look back at his rough figure propped against the sack, with the mare's head down beside his knee, at her swathed russet body, and the gold of the straw, the white walls and dusky nooks and shadows of that old stable, illumined by the "dimmy" light of the old lantern. And with the sense of having seen something holy I crept away up into the field where I had lingered the day before and sat down on the same half-way rock. Close on dawn it was, the moon still sailing wide over the moor and the flowers of this "buttercup night" fast closed, not taken in at all by her cold glory.

Most silent hour of all the twenty-four—when the soul slips half out of sheath and hovers in the cool ; when the spirit is most in tune with what, soon or late, happens to all spirits ; hour when a man cares least whether or no he be alive, as we understand the word. . "None of us goes such a brave way off—there's room for all, dead or alive." Though it was almost unbearably colourless and quiet, there was warmth in thinking of those words of his ; in the thought too, of the millions of living things snugly asleep all round ; warmth in realising that unanimity of sleep. Insects and flowers, birds, men, beasts, the very leaves on the trees—away in slumberland. Waiting for the first bird to chirrup, one had, perhaps, even a stronger feeling than in daytime of the unity and communion of all life, of the subtle brotherhood of living things



that fall all together into oblivion, and, all together, wake.

When dawn comes, while moonlight is still powdering the world's face, quite a long time passes before one realises how the quality of the light has changed ; and so, it was day before I knew it. Then the sun came up above the hills; dew began to sparkle and colour to stain the sky. That first praise of the sun from every bird and leaf and blade of grass, the tremulous flush and chime of dawn ! One has strayed far from the heart of things that it should come as something strange and wonderful ! Indeed, I noticed that the beasts and birds gazed at me as if I simply could not be there at this hour which so belonged to them. And to me, too, they seemed strange and new—with that in them "which passeth show," and as of a world where man did not exist, or existed only as just another sort of beast or bird.

But just then began the crowning glory of that dawn—the opening and lighting of the buttercups. Not one did I actually see unclose, yet of a sudden, they were awake, and the fields once more a blaze of gold.

## A NIGHT AMONG THE PINES

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

FROM Bleynard after dinner, although it was already late, I set out to scale a portion of the Lozère. An ill-marked stony drove-road guided me forward; and I met nearly half-a-dozen bullock-carts descending from the woods each laden with a whole pine-tree for the winter's firing. At the top of the woods, which do not climb very high upon this cold ridge, I struck leftward by a path among the pines, until I hit on a dell of green turf, where a streamlet made a little spout over some stones to serve me for a water-tap. 'In a more sacred or sequestered bower....nor nymph nor faunus haunted.' The trees were not old, but they grew thickly round the glade; there was no outlook, except north-eastward upon distant hill-tops or straight upward to the sky; and the encampment felt secure and private like a room. By the time I had made my arrangements and fed Modestine, the day was already beginning to decline. I buckled myself to the knees into my sack and made a hearty meal; and as soon as the sun went down, I pulled my cap over my eyes and fell asleep.

Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof; but in the open world it passes lightly, with its stars and dews and perfumes, and the hours are marked by changes in the face of Nature. What seems a kind

of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afieid. All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely ; even as she takes her rest, she turns and smiles ; and there is one stirring hour unknown to those who dwell in houses, when a waketul influence goes abroad over the sleeping hemisphere, and all the outdoor world are on their feet. It is then that the cock first crows, not this time to announce the dawn, but like a cheerful watchman speeding the course of night. Cattle awake on the meadows ; sheep break their fast on dewy hillsides, and change to a new lair among the ferns ; and houseless men, who have laid down with the fowls, open their dim eyes and behold the beauty of the night.

At what inaudible summons, at what gentle touch of Nature, are all these sleepers thus recalled in the same hour to life ? Do the stars rain down an influence, or do we share some thrill of mother earth below our resting bodics ? Even shepherds and old country-folk, who are the deepest read in these arcana, have not a guess as to the means or purpose of this nightly resurrection. Towards two in the morning they declare the thing takes place ; and neither know nor inquire further. And at least it is a pleasant incident. We are disturbed in our slumber only, like the luxurious Montaigne, 'that we may the better and more sensibly relish it.' We have a moment to look up on the stars. And there is a special pleasure for some minds in the reflection that we share the impulse with all outdoor creatures in our neighbourhood, that we have escaped out of the Bastille of civi-

lisation, and are become, for the time being, a mere kindly animal and a sheep of Nature's flock.

When that hour came to me among the pines, I wakened thirsty. My tin was standing by me half full of water. I emptied it at a draught; and feeling broad awake after this internal cold aspersion, sat upright to make a cigarette. The stars were clear, coloured, and jewel-like, but not frosty. A faint silvery vapour stood for the Milky Way. All around me the black fir-points stood upright and stock-still. By the whiteness of the pack-saddle, I could see Modestine walking round and round at the length of her tether; I could hear her steadily munching at the sward; but there was not another sound, save the indescribable quiet talk of the runnel over the stones. I lay lazily smoking and studying the colour of the sky, as we call the void of space, from where it showed a reddish grey behind the pines to where it showed a glossy blue-black between the stars. As if to be more like a pedlar, I wear a silver ring. This I could see faintly shining as I raised or lowered the cigarette; and at each whiff the inside of my hand was illuminated and became for a second the highest light on the landscape.

A faint wind, more like a moving coolness than a stream of air, passed down the glade from time to time; so that even in my great chamber the air was being renewed all night long. I thought with horror of the inn at Chasseradès and the congregated nightcaps; with horror of the nocturnal prowesses of clerks and students, of hot theatres and pass-keys and close

rooms. I have not often enjoyed a more serene possession of myself, nor felt more independent of material aids. The outer world, from which we cower into our houses, seemed after all a gentle habitable place ; and night after night a man's bed, it seemed, was laid and waiting for him in the fields, where God keeps an open house. I thought I had rediscovered one of those truths which are revealed to savages and hid from political economists ; at the least, I had discovered a new pleasure for myself. And yet even while I was exulting in my solitude I became aware of a strange lack. I wished a companion to lie near me in the starlight, silent and not moving, but ever within touch. For there is a fellowship more quiet even than solitude, and which, rightly understood, is solitude made perfect. And to live out of doors with the woman a man loves is of all lives the most complete and free.

As I thus lay, between content and longing, a faint noise stole towards me through the pines. I thought, at first, it was the crowing of cocks or the barking of dogs at some very distant farm ; but steadily and gradually it took articulate shape in my ears, until I became aware that a passenger was going by upon the high-road in the valley, and singing loudly as he went. There was more of good-will than grace in his performance ; but he trolled with ample lungs ; and the sound of his voice took hold upon the hillside and set the air shaking in the leafy glens. I have heard people passing by night in sleeping cities ; some of them sang ; one, I remember, played loudly on the bagpipes. I have heard the rattle of a cart or carriage spring up suddenly after hours of stillness, and pass, for some minutes, within the range of my

hearing as I lay abed. There is a romance about all who are abroad in the black hours, and with something of a thrill we try to guess their business. But here the romance was double; first this glad passenger, lit internally with wine, who sent up his voice in music through the night; and then I, on the other hand, buckled into my sack, and smoking alone in the pine-woods between four and five thousand feet towards the stars.

When I awoke again (Sunday, 29th September), many of the stars had disappeared; only the stronger companions of the night still burned visibly overhead; and away towards the east I saw a faint haze of light upon the horizon, such as had been the Milky Way when I was last awake. Day was at hand. I lit my lantern, and by its glow-worm light put on my boots and gaiters; then I broke up some bread for Modestine, filled my can at the water-tap, and lit my spirit-lamp to boil myself some chocolate. The blue darkness lay long in the glade where I had so sweetly slumbered; but soon there was a broad streak of orange melting into gold along the mountain-tops of Vivarais. A solemn glee possessed my mind at this gradual and lovely coming in of day. I heard the runnel with delight; I looked round me for something beautiful and unexpected; but the still black pine-trees, the hollow glade, the munching ass, remained unchanged in figure. Nothing had altered but the light, and that, indeed, shed over all a spirit of life and of breathing peace, and moved me to a strange exhilaration.

I drank my water-chocolate, which was hot if it was not rich, and strolled here and there, and up and

down about the glade. While I was thus delaying, a gush of steady wind, as long as a heavy sigh, poured direct out of the quarter of the morning. It was cold, and set me sneezing. The trees near at hand tossed their black plumes in its passage ; and I could see the thin distant spires of pine along the edge of the hill rock slightly to and fro against the golden east. Ten minutes after, the sunlight spread at a gallop along the hillside, scattering shadows and sparkles, and the day had come completely.

I hastened to prepare my pack, and tackle the steep ascent that lay before me, but I had something on my mind. It was only a fancy ; yet a fancy will sometimes be importunate. I had been most hospitably received and punctually served in my green caravanserai. The room was airy, the water excellent, and the dawn had called me to a moment. I say nothing of the tapestries or the inimitable ceiling, nor yet of the view which I commanded from the windows ; but I felt I was in some one's debt for all this liberal entertainment. And so it pleased me in a half-laughing way, to leave pieces of money on the turf as I went along, until I had left enough for my night's lodging. I trust they did not fall to some rich and churlish drover.

## A PIECE OF CHALK

BY

G. K. CHESTERTON

I remember one splendid morning, all blue and silver, in the summer holidays, when I reluctantly tore myself away from the task of doing nothing in particular, and put on a hat of some sort and picked up a walking-stick, and put six very bright-coloured chalks in my pocket. I then went into the kitchen (which, along with the rest of the house, belonged to a very square and sensible old woman in a Sussex village), and asked the owner and occupant of the kitchen, if she had any brown paper. She had a great deal ; in fact, she had too much ; and she mistook the purpose and the rationale of the existence of brown paper. She seemed to have an idea that if a person wanted brown paper he must be wanting to tie up parcels, which was the last thing I wanted to do ; indeed, it is a thing which I have found to be beyond my mental capacity. Hence she dwelt very much on the varying qualities of toughness and endurance in the material. I explained to her that I only wanted to draw pictures on it, and that I did not want them to endure in the least ; and that from my point of view, therefore, it was a question not of tough consistency, but of responsive surface, a thing comparatively irrelevant in a parcel. When she understood that I wanted to draw she offered to overwhelm me



with note-paper, apparently supposing that I did my notes and correspondence on old brown paper wrappers from motives of economy.

I then tried to explain the rather delicate logical shade, that I not only liked brown paper, but liked the quality of brownness in paper, just as I liked the quality of brownness in October woods, or in beer, or in the peat-streams of the North. Brown paper represents the primal twilight of the first toil of creation, and with a bright-coloured chalk or two you can pick out points of fire in it, sparks of gold, and blood-red, and sea-green, like the first fierce stars that sprang out of divine darkness. All this I said (in an off-hand way) to the old woman ; and I put the brown paper in my pocket along with the chalks, and possibly other things. I suppose every one must have reflected how *primeval* and how poetical are the things that one carries in one's pocket ; the pocket-knife, for instance, the type of all human tools, the infant of the sword. Once I planned to write a book of poems entirely about the things in my pocket. But I found it would be too long ; and the age of the great epics is past.

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With my stick and my knife, my chalks and my brown paper, I went out on to the great downs. I crawled across those colossal contours that express the best quality of England, because they are at the same time soft and strong. The smoothness of them has the same meaning as the smoothness of great cart-horses, or the smoothness of the beech-tree ; it declares in the teeth of our timid and cruel theories that the mighty are merciful. As my eye swept the landscape, the landscape was as kindly as any of its cottages,

but for power it was like an earthquake. The villages in the immense valley were safe, one could see, for centuries ; yet the lifting of the whole land was like the lifting of one enormous wave to wash them all away.

I crossed one swell of living turf after another, looking for a place to sit down and draw. Do not, for heaven's sake, imagine I was going to sketch from Nature. I was going to draw devils and seraphim, and blind old gods that men worshipped before the dawn of right, and saints in robes of angry crimson, and seas of strange green, and all the sacred or monstrous symbols that look so well in bright colours on brown paper. They are much better worth drawing than Nature ; also they are much easier to draw. When a cow came slouching by in the field next to me, a mere artist might have drawn it ; but I always get wrong in the hind legs of quadrupeds. So I drew the soul of the cow, which I saw there plainly walking before me, in the sunlight ; and the soul was all purple and silver and had seven horns and the mystery that belongs to all the beasts. But though I could not with a crayon get the best out of the landscape, it does not follow that the landscape was not getting the best out of me. And this, I think, is the mistake that people make about the old poets who lived before Wordsworth, and were supposed not to care very much about Nature because they did not describe it much.

They preferred writing about great men to writing about great hills ; but they sat on the great hills to write it. They gave out much less about Nature, but they drank in, perhaps, much more. They painted the white robes of their holy virgins with the blinding

snow, at which they had stared all day. They blazoned the shields of their paladins with the purple and gold of many heraldic sunsets. The greenness of a thousand green leaves clustered into the live green figure of Robin Hood. The blueness of a score of forgotten skies became the blue robes of the Virgin. The inspiration went in like sunbeams and came out like Apollo.

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But as I sat scrawling these silly figures on the brown paper, it began to dawn on me, to my great disgust, that I had left one chalk, and that a most exquisite and essential chalk, behind. I searched all my pockets, but I could not find any white chalk. Now, those who are acquainted with all the philosophy (nay, religion) which is typified in the art of drawing on brown paper, know that white is positive and essential. I cannot avoid remarking here upon a moral significance. One of the wise and awful truths which this brown-paper art reveals, is this, that white is a colour. It is not a mere absence of colour ; it is a shining and affirmative thing, as fierce as red, as definite as black. When (so to speak) your pencil grows red-hot, it draws roses ; when it grows white-hot, it draws stars. And one of the two or three defiant verities of the best religious morality, of real Christianity for example, is exactly this same thing ; the chief assertion of religious morality is that white is a colour. Virtue is not the absence of vices or the avoidance of moral dangers ; virtue is a vivid and separate thing, like pain or a particular smell. Mercy does not mean not being cruel or sparing people revenge or punishment, it means a plain and positive thing like

the sun, which one has either seen or not seen. Chastity does not mean abstention from sexual wrong; it means something flaming, like Joan of Arc. In a word, God paints in many colours; but He never paints so gorgeously, I had almost said so gaudily as when He paints in white. In a sense our age has realized this fact, and expressed it in our sullen costume. For if it were really true that white was a blank and colourless thing, negative and non-committal, then white would be used instead of black and grey for the funeral dress of this pessimistic period. We should see city gentlemen in frock-coats of spotless silver satin, with top-hats as white as wonderful arum lilies, which is not the case.

Meanwhile, I could not find my chalk.

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I sat on the hill in a sort of despair. There was no town nearer than Chichester at which it was even remotely probable that there would be such a thing as an artist's colourman. And yet without white, my absurd little pictures would be as pointless as the world would be if there were no good people in it. I stared stupidly round, racking my brain for expedients. Then I suddenly stood up and roared with laughter, again and again, so that the cows stared at me and called a committee. Imagine a man in the Sahara regretting that he had no sand for his hour-glass. Imagine a gentleman in mid-ocean wishing that he had brought some salt water with him for his chemical experiments. I was sitting on an immense warehouse of white chalk. The landscape was made entirely out of white chalk. White chalk was piled mere miles

until it met the sky. I stooped and broke a piece off the rock I sat on. It did not mark so well as the shop chalks do ; but it gave the effect. And I stood there in a trance of pleasure, realizing that this Southern England is not only a grand peninsula, and a tradition and a civilization ; it is something even more admirable. It is a piece of chalk.

## SECRET OF THE CHARM OF FLOWERS

BY

W. H. HUDSON

When my mind was occupied with the subject of the last chapter—the human quality in some sweet bird voices—it struck me forcibly that all resemblances to man in the animal and vegetable worlds and in inanimate nature, enter largely into and strongly colour our æsthetic feelings. We have but to listen to the human tone in wind and water, and in animal voices; and to recognise the human shape in plant, and rock, and cloud, and in the round heads of certain mammals, like the seal; and the human expression in the eyes, and faces generally, of many mammals, birds and reptiles, to know that these casual resemblances are a great deal to us. They constitute the *expression* of numberless natural sights and sounds with which we are familiar, although in a majority of cases the resemblance being but slight, and to some one quality only, we are not conscious of the cause of the expression.

It was principally with flowers, which excite more attention and give more pleasure than most natural objects, that my mind was occupied in this connection; for here it seemed to me that the effect was similar to that produced on the mind by sweet human-like tones in bird music. In other words,

a very great if not the principal charm of the flower was to be traced to the human associations of its colouring; and this was, in some cases, more than all its other attractions, including beauty of form, purity and brilliance of colour, and the harmonious arrangement of colours; and, finally, fragrance, where such a quality existed.

We see, then, that there is an intimate connection between the two subjects—human association in the colouring of flowers and in the voices of birds; and that in both cases this association constitutes, or is a principal element in, the *expression*. This connection, and the fact that the present subject was suggested and appeared almost an inevitable outcome of the one last discussed, must be my excuse for introducing a chapter on flowers in a book on birds—or birds and man. But an excuse is hardly needed. It must strike most readers that a great fault of books on birds is, that there is too much about birds in them, consequently that a chapter about something else which has not exactly been dragged in, may come as a positive relief.

As the word ‘*expression*’ which occurs with frequency in this chapter was not understood in the sense in which I used it on the first appearance of the book, it may be well to explain that it is not used here in its ordinary meaning as the quality in a face, or picture, or any work of art, which indicates thought or feeling. Here the word has the meaning given to it by writers on the æsthetic sense as descriptive of the quality imparted to an object by its associations. These may be untraceable; we may not be conscious

and as a rule we are not conscious that any such associations exist; nevertheless they are in us all the time, and with what they add to an object may enhance and even double its intrinsic beauty and charm.

I have somewhere read a very ancient legend, which tells that man was originally made of many materials, and that at the last a bunch of wild flowers was gathered and thrown into the mixture to give colour to his eyes. It is a pretty story, but might have been better told, since it is certain that flowers which have delicate and beautiful flesh-tints are attractive mainly on that account, just as blue and some purples delight us chiefly because of their associations with the human iris. The skin, too, needed some beautiful colour, and there were red as well as blue flowers in the bunch; and the red flowers being most abundant in nature and in greater variety of tints, give us altogether more pleasure than their beautiful rivals in our affection.

The blue flower is associated, consciously or not, with the human blue eye; and as the floral blue is in all or nearly all instances pure and beautiful, it is like the most beautiful human eye. This association, and not the colour itself, strikes me as the true cause of the superior attraction which the blue flower has for most of us. (Apart from association blue is less attractive than red, orange, and yellow, because less luminous; furthermore green is the least effective background for such a colour as blue in so small an object as a flower; and, as a fact, we see that at a little distance the blue of the flower is absorbed and disappears in the surrounding green, while reds and



yellows keep their splendour. Nevertheless the blue has a stronger hold on our affections. As a human colour, blue comes first in a blue-eyed race because it is the colour of the most important feature, and, we may say, of the very soul in man.

Some purple flowers stand next in our regard on account of their nearness in colour to the pure blue. The wild hyacinth, blue-bottle, violet, and pansy, and some others, will occur to everyone. These are the purple flowers in which blue predominates, and on that account have the same expression as the blue. The purples in which red predominates are akin in expression to the reds, and are associated with flesh-tints and blood. And here it may be noted that the blue and blue-purple flowers, which have the greatest charm for us, are those on which not only the colour of the eye but some resemblance in their form to the iris, with its central spot representing the pupil, appears. For example, the flax, borage, blue geranium, periwinkle, forget-me-not, speedwell, pansy and blue pimpernel, are actually more to us than some larger and handsomer blue flowers, such as the blue-bottle, viper's bugloss, and succory, and blue flowers seen in masses.

With regard to the numerous blue and purple-blue flowers which we all admire, or rather for which we all feel so great an affection, we find that in many cases their very names have been suggested by their human associations—by their *expression*.

Love-in-a-mist, angels' eyes, forget-me-not, and heartsease, are familiar examples. Heartsease and pansy both strike us as peculiarly appropriate to one

of our commonest and most universal garden flowers: yet we see something besides the sympathetic and restful expression which suggested these names in this flower—a certain suggestion of demureness, in fact, reminding those who have seen Guido's picture of the "Adoration of the Virgin," of one of his loveliest angels whose angelical eyes and face reveal some desire for admiration and love in the spectator. And that expression, too, of the pansy named Love-in-Idleness, has been described, coarsely or rudely it may be, in some of its country names: "Kiss me behind the garden gate, and, better (or worse) still, "Mcet-her-i'-th'-entry-kiss-her-i'-th'-buttery." Of this order of names are None-so-pretty and Pretty maids, Pretty Betsy, Kiss-me-quick. Even such a name as Tears of the blood of Christ does not sound extravagantly fanciful or startling when we look at the glowing deep, golden crimson of the wallflower; nor of a blue flower the germander speedwell, such names as, The more I see you the more I love you, and Angels' tears, and Tears of Christ, with many more.

A writer on our wild flowers, in speaking of their vernacular names of this kind, has said: "Could we penetrate to the original suggestive idea that called forth its name, it would bring valuable information about the first openings of the human mind towards nature; and the merest dream of such a discovery invests with a strange charm the words that could tell, if we could understand, so much of the forgotten infancy of the human race."

What a roll of words and what a mighty and mysterious business is here made of a very simple little

matter! It is a charming example of the strange helplessness, not to say imbecility, which affects most of those who have been trained in our mind-killing schools; trained not to think, but taught to go for anything and everything they desire to know to the books. If the books in the British Museum fail to say why our ancestors hundreds of years ago named a flower *None-so-pretty* or *Love-in-a-mist*, why then we must be satisfied to sit in thick darkness with regard to this matter until some heaven-born genius descends to illuminate us! Yet I daresay there is not a country child who does not occasionally invent a name for some plant or creature which has attracted his attention; and in many cases the child's new name is suggested by some human association in the object—some resemblance to be seen in form or colour or sound. Not books but the light of nature, the experience of our own early years, the look which no person not blinded by reading can fail to see in a flower, is sufficient to reveal all this hidden wonderful knowledge about the first openings of the heart towards nature, during the remote infancy of the human race.

From this it will be seen that I am not claiming a discovery; that what I have called a secret of the charm of flowers is a secret known to every man, woman, and child, even to those of my own friends, who stoutly deny that they have any such knowledge. But I think it is best known to children. What I am here doing is merely to bring together and put in from certain more or less vague thoughts and feelings which I (and therefore all of us) have about flowers; and it is a small matter, but it happens to be one which no person has hitherto attempted.

It may be that in some of my readers' minds—those who, like the sceptical friends I have mentioned, are not distinctly conscious of the cause or secret of the expression of a flower—some doubt may still remain after what has been said of the blue and purple-blue blossom. Such a doubt ought to disappear when the reds are considered, and when it is found that the expression peculiar to red flowers varies infinitely in degree, and is always greatest in those shades of the colour which come nearest to the most beautiful flesh-tints.

When I say "beautiful flesh-tints" I am thinking of the æsthetic pleasure which we receive from the expression, the associations, of the red flower. The expression which delights is in the soft and delicate shades; and in the texture which is sometimes like the beautiful soft skin; but the *expression* would exist still in the case of floral tints resembling the unpleasant reds, or the reds which disgust us, in the human face. And we most of us know that these distressing hues are to be seen in some flowers. I remember that I once went into a florist's shop, and seeing a great mass of hard purple-red cinerarias on a shelf I made some remark about them. "Yes, are they not beautiful?" said the woman in the shop. "No, I loathe the sight of them," I returned. "So do I!" she said very quickly, and then added that she called them beautiful because she had to sell them. She, too, had no doubt seen that same purple-red colour in the evil flower called "grog-blossom," and in the faces of many middle-aged lovers of the bottle, male and female, who would perish before their time, to the great relief of their kindred, and whose actions after

they were gone would not smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

The reds we like best in flowers are the delicate roseate and pinky shades; they are more to us than the purest and most luminous tints. And here, as with bird notes which delight us on account of their resemblance to fresh, young, highly musical human voices, flowers please us best when they exhibit the loveliest human tints--the apple blossom and the bindweed, musk mallow and almond and wild rose, for example. After these we are most taken with the deeper but soft and not too luminous reds--the red which we admire in the red horse-chestnut blossom, and many other flowers, down to the minute pimpernel. Next come the intense rosy reds seen in the herb-robert and other wild geraniums, valerian, red campion and ragged robin; and this shade of red, intensified but still soft, is seen in the willow-herb and foxglove and, still more intensified, in the bell-and small-leaved heath. Some if not all of these pleasing reds have purple in them, and there are very many distinctly purple flowers that appeal to us in the same way that red flowers do, receiving their expression from the same cause. There is some purple colour in most skins, and even some blue.

The azured harebell, like thy veins, is a familiar verse from *Cymbeline*; anyone can see the resemblance to the pale blue of that admired and loved blossom in the blue veins of any person with a delicate skin. Purples and purplish reds in masses are mostly seen in young persons of delicate skins and high colour in frosty weather in winter, when the eyes sparkle

and the face glows with the happy sensations natural to the young and healthy during and after outdoor exercise. The skin purples and purple-reds here described are beautiful, and may be matched to a nicety in many flowers; the human purple may be seen (to name a very common wild flower) in purple loosestrife and the large marsh mallow, and in dozens and scores of other familiar purple flowers; and the purple-red hue in many richly coloured skins has its exact shade in common hound's-tongue, and in other dark and purple-red flowers. But we always find, I fancy, that the expression due to human associations in a purple flower is greatest when this colour (as in the human face) is placed side by side or fades into some shade of red or pink. I think we may see this even in a small flower like the fumitory, in which one portion is deep purple and all the rest of the blossoms a delicate pink. Even when the red is very intense, as in the common field poppy, the pleasing expression of purple on red is very evident.

To return to pure reds. We may say that just as purples in flowers look best, or have a greater degree of expression, when appearing in or with reds, so do the most delicate rose and pink shades appeal most to us when they appear as a tinge or blush on white flowers. Probably the flower that gives the most pleasure on account of its beautiful flesh-tints of different shades is the Gloire de Dijon rose, so common with us and so universal a favourite. Roses, being mostly of the garden, are out of my line, but they are certainly glorious to look at—glorious because of their associations, their expression, whether we

know it or not. One can forgive Thomas Carew the conceit in his lines:

Ask me no more where Jove bestows  
When June is past, the fading rose,  
For in your beauty's orient deep  
These flowers as in their causes sleep.

But all reds have something human, even the most luminous scarlets and crimsons—the scarlet ver-bena, the poppy, our garden geraniums, etc.—although in intensity they so greatly surpass the brightest colour of the lips and the most vivid blush on the cheek. Luminous reds are not, however, confined to lips and cheeks; even the fingers when held up before the eyes to the sun or to fire-light show a very delicate and beautiful red; and this same brilliant floral hue is seen at times in the membrane of the ear. It is, in fact, the colour of blood, and that bright fluid, which is the life, and is often spilt, comes very much into the human associations of flowers. The Persian poet, whose name is best left unwritten, since from hearing it too often most persons are now sick and tired of it, has said:

I sometimes think that never blooms so red  
The rose as where some buried Cæsar bled.

There is many and many a “plant of the blood of men.” Our most common Love-lies-bleeding with its “dropping wells” of crimson serves to remind us that there are numberless vulgar names that express this resemblance and association. The thought or fancy is found everywhere in poetic literature, in the fables

of antiquity, in the tales and folk-lore of all nations, civilised and barbarous.

I think that we can more quickly recognise this human interest in a flower, due to its colour, and best appreciate its æsthetic value from this cause, when we turn from the blues, purples, and reds, to the whites and the yellows. The feeling these last give us is distinctly different in character from that produced by the other. They are not like us, nor like any living sentient thing we are related to ; there is no kinship, no human quality.

When I say "no kinship, no human quality," I refer to flowers that are entirely pure white or pure yellow; in some dull or impure yellows, and in white and yellow flowers that have some tinge or mixture of red or purple, we do get the expression of the red and purple flower. The crystalline and snow white of the whitest flowers do indeed resemble the white of the eyeballs and the teeth in human faces; but we may see that this human white colour by itself has no human association in a flower.

The whiteness of the white flower where there is any red is never unhuman, probably because a very brilliant red or rose colour on some delicate skins causes the light flesh-tints to appear white by contrast, and is the complexion known as "milk and roses." The apple-blossom is a beautiful example, and the beloved daisy—the "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower," which would be so much less dear but for that touch of human crimson. This is the herb-Margaret of so many tender and pretty legends, that has white



for purity and red for repentance. Even those who have never read these legends and that prettiest, most pathetic of all which tells of the daisy's origin, find a secret charm in the flower. Among other common examples are the rosy white hawthorn, wood anemone, bindweed, dropwort, and many others. In the dropwort the rosy buds are seen among the creamy white open flowers; and the expression is always very marked and beautiful when there is any red or purple tinge or blush on cream-whites and ivory-whites. When we look from the dropwort to its nearest relative, the common meadow-sweet, we see how great a charm the touch of rose-red has given to the first; the meadow-sweet has no expression of the kind we are considering --no human association.

In pure yellow flowers, as in pure white, human interest is wanting. It is true that yellow is a human colour, since in the hair we find yellows of different shades --it is a pity that we cannot find, or have not found, a better word than "shades" for the specific differences of a colour. There is the so-called tow, the tawny, the bronze, the simple yellow, and the golden, which includes many varieties, and the hair called carroty. But none of these has the flower yellow. Richard Jefferies tells us that when he placed a sovereign by the side of a dandelion he saw how unlike the two colours were--that, in fact, no two colours could seem more unlike than the yellow of gold and the yellow of the flower. It is not necessary to set a lock of hair and any yellow flower side by side to know how utterly different the hues are. The yellow of the hair is like that of metals, of clay, of stone, and of various earthy substances, and like the fur of some mammals, and like

xanthophyll in leaf and stalk, and the yellow sometimes seen in clouds. When Ossian, in his famous address to the sun, speaks of his yellow hair floating on the eastern clouds, we instantly feel the truth as well as beauty of the simile. We admire the yellow flower for the purity and brilliance of its colour, just as we admire some bird notes solely for the purity and brightness of the sound, however unlike the human voice they may be. We also admire it in many instances for the exquisite beauty of its form, and the beauty of the contrast of pure yellow and deep green, as in the yellow flag, mimulus, and numerous other plants. But however much we may admire, we do not experience that intimate and tender feeling which the blues and reds inspire in us; in other words, the yellow flower has not the expression which distinguishes those of other colours. Thus, when Tennyson speaks of the "speedwell's darling blue," we know that he is right—that he expresses a feeling about this flower common to all of us; but no poet would make so great, so absurd a mistake as to describe the purest and loveliest yellow of the most prized and familiar wild flower—buttercup or kingcup, yellow flag, sea poppy, marsh marigold, or broom, or furze, or rock-rose, let us say, by such a word—the word that denotes an intimate and affectionate feeling—the feeling one cherishes for the loved ones of our kind. Nor could that word of Tennyson be properly used of any pure white flower—the stitchwort for instance; nor of any white and yellow flower like the Marguerite. But no sooner do you get a touch of rose or crimson in the whitest flower, as we see in the daisy and eyebright, than you can say

of it that it is a "dear" or a "darling" colour, and no one can find fault with the expression.

When we consider the dull and impure yellows sometimes seen in flowers, and some soft yellows seen in combination with pleasing wholesome reds, as in the honeysuckle, we may find something of the expression—the human association—in yellow flowers. For there is yellow in the skin, even in perfect health; it appears strongest on the neck, and spread round to the throat and chin, and is a warm buff, very beautiful in some women; but very little of this tint appears in the face. When a tinge of this warm buffy yellow and creamy yellow is seen mixed with warmer reds, as in the Gloire de Dijon rose, the effect is most beautiful and the expression most marked. But the expression in flowers of a pale, dull, impure yellow, where there is an expression, is unpleasant. It is the yellow of unhealthy skins, of faces discoloured by jaundice, dyspepsia, and other ailments. We commonly say of such flowers that they are "sickly" in colour, and the association is with sick and decaying humanity. Gerarde, in describing such hues in flowers, was fond of the word "overworn"; and it was a very good word, and, like the one now in use, is derived from the association.

It will be noted by those who are acquainted with many flowers that I have given the names of but few—it may be too few—as examples, and that these are nearly all of familiar wild flowers. My reason for not going to the garden is, that our cultivated blooms are not only artificially produced, and in some degree monstrosities, but they are seen in unnatural conditions, in

crowds and masses, the various kinds too near together, and in most cases selected on account of their gorgeous colouring. The effect produced, however delightful it may be in some ways, is confusing to those simple natural feelings which flowers in a state of nature cause in us.

I confess that gardens in most cases affect me disagreeably ; hence I avoid them, and think and know little about garden flowers. It is of course impossible not to go into gardens. The large garden is the greatly valued annexe of the large house, and is as much or more to the mistress than the coverts to the master ; and when I am asked to go into the garden to see and admire all that is there, I cannot say, " Madam, I hate gardens." On the contrary, I must weakly comply and pretend to be pleased. And when going the rounds of her paradise my eyes light by chance on a bed of tulips, or scarlet geraniums, or blue larkspurs, or detested calceolarias or cinerarias—a great patch of coloured flame springing out of a square or round bed of grassless, brown, desolate earth—the effect is more than disagreeable ; the mass of colour glares at and takes possession of me, and spreads itself over and blots out a hundred delicate and prized images of things seen that existed in the mind.

But I am going too far, and perhaps making an enemy of a reader when I would much prefer to have him (or her) for a friend.

I have named few flowers, and those all the most familiar kinds, because it seemed to me that many examples would have had a confusing effect on readers

who do not intimately know many species, or do not remember the exact colour in each case, and are therefore unable to reproduce in their minds the exact *expression*—the feeling which every flower conveys. On the other hand, the reader who knows and loves flowers, who has in his mind the distinct images of many scores, perhaps of two or three hundreds of species, can add to my examples many more from his own memory.

There is one objection to the explanation given here of the cause of the charm of certain flowers, which will instantly occur to some readers, and may as well be answered in advance. This view, or theory, must be wrong, a reader will perhaps say, because my own preference is for a yellow flower (the primrose or daffodil, let us say), which to me has a beauty and charm exceeding all other flowers.

The obvious explanation of such a preference would be that the particular flower preferred is intimately associated with recollections of a happy childhood, or of early life. The associations will have made it a flower among flowers, charged with a subtle magic, so that the mere sight or smell of it calls up beautiful visions before the mind's eye. Every person bred in a country place is affected in this way by certain natural objects and odours; and I recall the case of Cuvier, who was always affected to tears by the sight of some common yellow flower, the name of which I have forgotten.

The way to test the theory is to take, or think of, two or three or half a dozen flowers that have no

personal associations with one's own early life—that are not, like the primrose and daffodil in the foregoing instance, sacred flowers, unlike all others ; some with and some without human colouring, and consider the feeling produced in each case on the mind. If anyone will look at, say, a Gloire de Dijon rose (in some persons its mental image will serve as well as the object itself) and then at a perfect white chrysanthemum, or lily, or other beautiful white flower ; then at a perfect yellow chrysanthemum, or an allamanda, and at any exquisitely beautiful orchid, that has no human colour in it, which he may be acquainted with, he will probably say : I admire these chrysanthemums and other flowers more than the rose ; they are most perfect in their beauty—I cannot imagine anything more beautiful ; but though the rose is less beautiful and splendid, the admiration I have for it appears to differ somewhat in character—to be mixed with some new element which makes this flower actually more to me than the others.

That something different, and something more, is the human association which this flower has for us in virtue of its colour ; and the new element—the feeling it inspires, which has something of tenderness and affection in it—is one and the same with the feeling which we have for human beauty.

The foregoing has been given here with a few alterations, mainly verbal, as it appeared originally ; something now remains to be added.

When writing about the wild flowers of West Cornwall in a work on *The Land's End* (1908), I returned to the subject of the charm of flowers due

to their human colouring, and will repeat here much of what was there said.

Some of the readers of my flower chapter were not convinced that I had made out my case ; it came as a surprise to them, and in some instances they cherished views of their own which they did not want to give up. Thus, two of my critics, writing independently, expressed their belief that flowers are precious to us and seem more beautiful than they are, because they are absolutely unrelated to our human life with its passions, sorrows, and tragedies—because, looking at flowers, we are taken into, or have glimpses of, another and brighter world such as a disembodied spirit might find itself in. It was nothing more than a pretty fancy ; but I had other more thoughtful critics, and during my correspondence with them I became convinced of a serious omission in my account of the blue flower, when I said that its expression was due to association with the blue eye in man. The strongest of my friendly adversaries informed me that any man can revel at will among his own personal feelings and associations ; that these were a “ kind of bloom on the intrinsic beauty of things ”—a happy phrase ! He then asks : “ What does blue suggest to a sailor ? Sometimes the sea, sometimes the sky, sometimes the Blue Peter ; but if you ask him what does blue paint suggest he would say *mourning*, that being the colour of a ship’s mourning. Dr. Sutton always called blue *no colour*, because it was the colour of death, the sign of the withdrawal of life.”

This was interesting but fails as an argument since it was taken for granted in the chapter that blue

in a flower or anything else, and in fact any colour, possesses individual associations for every one of us, according to what we are, to the temper of our minds, to the conditions in which we exist, our vocation, our early life, and so on. Blue may suggest sea and sky and the Blue Peter to a sailor, and yet the blue flower have an expression due to its human association in him as in another.

But my critic dropped by chance into something better, when he went on to ask, "Why shouldn't the heaven's blue make us love flowers? It does in my case I know, and I can *feel* the different blues of skies and air and distance in flower blue."

Undoubtedly he was right; the blue sky, fair weather, the open air, was a suggestion of the blue flower. It amazed me to think of the years I had spent under blue skies and of all I had felt about blue flowers, without stumbling upon this very simple fact. So simple, so near to the surface that you no sooner hear it than you imagine you have always known it! It was impossible to look at blue flowers and not be convinced of its truth, especially when the flowers were spread over considerable areas, as when I looked at wild hyacinths in the spring woods, or followed the interminable blue band of the vernal squill on the west Cornish coast, or saw large arid tracts of land in Suffolk blue with viper's bugloss.

Oddly enough just after the letter containing this criticism had reached me, another correspondent who was also among my opponents, sent me this fine passage from the old writer Sir John Ferne, on azure in blazoning: "Which blew colour representeth the



Aire amongst the elements, that of all the rest is the greatest favourer of life, as the only nurse and maintainer of spirits in any living creature. The colour blew is commonly taken from the blue skye which appeareth so often as the tempests be overblowne, and notes prosperous successe and good fortune to the wearer in all his affayres."

In conclusion, after having adopted this new idea, my view is still that the human association is the principal factor in the expression of the blue flower, or at all events in a majority of flowers that bloom more or less sparingly and are usually seen as single blooms, not as mere splashes of colour. Such are the pansy, violet, speedwell, harebell, lungwort, blue geranium, etc. It may be that in all flowers of this kind too an element in the expression is due to the fair-weather associations with the colour; but these associations must be very much stronger in the case of a blue flower always seen in masses and sheets of colour as the wild hyacinth. Among dark-eyed races the fair-weather associations would alone give the blue flower its expression. I shouldn't wonder, if some explorer with a curious mind would try to find out what savages feel about flowers, that he would discover in them a special regard for the blue flower.

## “ WITH BRAINS, SIR ”

BY

DR. JOHN BROWN

“Pray, Mr. Opie, may I ask what you mix your colours with?” said a brisk dilettante student to the great painter. “With Brains, Sir,” was the gruff reply—and the right one. It did not give much of what we call information; it did not expound the principles and rules of the art; but, if the inquirer had the commodity referred to, it would awaken him ; it would set him a-going, a-thinking, and a-painting to good purpose. If he had not the wherewithal, as was likely enough, the less he had to do with colours and their mixture the better. Many other artists, when asked such a question, would have either set about detailing the mechanical composition of such and such colours, in such and such proportions, rubbed up so and so; or perhaps they would (and so much the better, but not the best) have shown him how they laid them on ; but even this would leave him at the critical point. Opie preferred going to the quick and the heart of the matter : “With Brains, Sir.”

Sir Joshua Reynolds was taken by a friend to see a picture. He was anxious to admire it, and he looked it over with a keen and careful but favourable eye. “Capital composition ; correct drawing; the colour, tone, chiaroscuro excellent; but—but—it wants, hang it,

it wants—*That!*” snapping his fingers; and, wanting “that,” though it had everything else, it was worth nothing.

Again, Etty was appointed teacher of the students of the Royal Academy, having been preceded by a clever, talkative, scientific expounder of æsthetics, who delighted to tell the young men *how* everything was done, how to copy this, and how to express that. A student came up to the new master, “How should I do this, Sir?” “Suppose you try.” Another, “What does this mean, Mr. Etty?” “Suppose you look.” “But I have looked.” “Suppose you look again.” And they did try, and they did look, and looked again; and they saw and achieved what they never could have done, had the *how* or the *what* (supposing this possible, which it is not in its full and highest meaning) been told them, or done for them; in the one case, sight and action were immediate, exact, intense, and secure; in the other mediate, feeble, and lost as soon as gained. But what are “*brains*”? what did Opie mean? and what is Sir Joshua’s “*That*”? What is included in it? and what is the use, or the need, of trying and trying, of missing often before you hit, when you can be told at once and be done with it; or of looking when you may be shown? Everything in medicine and in painting—practical arts—as means to ends, let their scientific enlargement be ever so rapid and immense, depends upon the right answers to these questions.

First of all, “*brains*”, in the painter, are not diligence, knowledge, skill, sensibility, a strong will, or a high aim,—he may have all these, and never paint anything so truly good or effective as the rugged wood-

cut we must all remember, of Apollyon bestriding the whole breadth of the way and Christian girding at him like a man, in the old six-penny *Pilgrim's Progress*; and a young medical student may have zeal, knowledge, ingenuity, attention, a good eye and a steady hand—he may be an accomplished anatomist, stethoscopist, histologist and analyst; and yet, with all this, and all the lectures, and all the books, and all the sayings, and all the preparations, drawings, tables, and other helps of his teachers, crowded into his memory or his notebooks, he may be beaten in treating a whitlow or a colic, by the nurse in the wards where he was clerk, or by the old country doctor who brought him into the world, and who listens with such humble wonder to his young friend's account, on his coming home after each session, of all he had seen and done,—of all the last astonishing discoveries and operations of the day. What the painter wants, in addition to, and as the complement of, the other elements, is *genius and sense*; what the doctor needs to crown and give worth and safety to his accomplishments, is *sense and genius*: in the first case, more of this, than of that; in the second, more of that, than of this. These are the “*Brains*” and the “*That*.”

And what is genius and what is sense? Genius is a peculiar native aptitude, or tendency, to any one calling or pursuit over all others. A man may have a genius for governing, for killing, or for curing the greatest number of men, and in the best possible manner; a man may have a genius for the fiddle, or his mission may be for the tight rope, or the Jew's harp; or it may be a natural turn for seeking, and finding, and teaching truth, and for doing the greatest possible

good to mankind; or it may be a turn equally natural for seeking, and finding, and teaching a lie, and doing the *maximum* of mischief. It was as natural, as inevitable, for Wilkie to develop himself into a painter, and such a painter as we know him to have been, as it is for an acorn when planted to grow up into an oak, a specific *quercus robur*. But *genius*, and nothing else, is not enough even for a painter; he must likewise have *sense*; and what is sense? *Sense* drives, or ought to drive, the coach; sense regulates, combines, restrains, commands, all the rest—even the genius; and sense implies exactness and soundness, power and promptitude of mind.

Then for the young doctor, he must have as his main, his master faculty, SENSE—Brains—justness of mind, because his subject-matter is one in which principle works, rather than impulse as in painting; the understanding has first to do with it, however much it is worthy of the full exercise of the feelings, and the affections. But all will not do, if *Genius* is not there,—a real turn for the profession. It may not be a liking for it—some of the best of its practitioners never really liked it, at least liked other things better; but there must be a fitness of faculty of body and mind for its full, constant, exact pursuit. This sense and this genius, such a special therapeutic gift, had Hippocrates, Sydenham, Pott, Pinel, John Hunter, Delpech, Depuytren, Kellie, Cheyne, Baillie, and Abercrombie. We might, to pursue the subject, pick out painters who had much genius and little or no sense, and *vice versa*; and physicians and surgeons, who had sense without genius, and genius without sense, and some

perhaps who had neither, and yet were noticeable, and in their own sideways, useful men.

But our great object will be gained if we have given our young readers (and these remarks are addressed exclusively to students) an idea of what we mean, if we have made them think, and look inwards. The noble and sacred science you have entered on is large, difficult, and deep, beyond most others ; it is every day becoming larger, deeper, and in many senses, more difficult, more complicated and involved. It requires *more than the average* intellect, energy, attention, patience, and courage, and that singular but imperial quality, at once a gift and an acquirement, presence of mind,—than almost any other department of human thought and action, except perhaps that of ruling men. Therefore it is, that we hold it to be of paramount importance that the parents, teachers, and friends of youths intended for medicine, and above all, that those who examine them on their entering on their studies, should at least (we might safely go much further) satisfy themselves as far as they can, that they are not below *par* in intelligence; they may be deficient and unapt, *qua medici*, and yet, if taken in time, may make excellent men in other useful and honourable callings.

But suppose we have got the requisite amount and specific kind of capacity, how are we to fill it with its means; how are we to make it effectual for its end ? On this point we say nothing; except that the fear, now-a-days, is rather that the mind gets too much of too many things, than too little or too few. But this means of turning knowledge to action, making it

what Bacon meant when he said it was power, invigorating the thinking substance—giving tone, and you may call it muscle and nerve, blood and bone, to the mind—a firm gripe, and a keen and sure eye: *that*, we think, is far too little considered or cared for at present, as if the mere act of filling in everything for ever into a poor lad's brain, would give him the ability to make anything of it, and above all, the power to appropriate the small portions of true nutriment, and reject the dregs.

One comfort we have, that in the main, and in the last resort, there is really very little that *can* be done for any man by another. Begin with the sense and the genius—the keen appetite and the good digestion—and, amid all obstacles and hardships, the work goes on merrily and well; without these we all know what a laborious affair, and a dismal, it is to make an incapable youth apply.

But it may be asked, how are the brains to be strengthened, the sense quickened, the genius awakened, the affections raised—the whole man turned to the best account for the cure of his fellowmen? How are you, when physics and physiology are increasing so marvellously, and when the burden of knowledge, the quantity of transferable information, of registered facts, of current names—and such names!—is so infinite: how are you to enable a student to take all in, bear up under all, and use it as not abusing it, or being abused by it? You must invigorate the containing and sustaining mind, you must strengthen him from within, as well as fill him from without; you must discipline, nourish, edify, relieve, and refresh his

entire nature ; and how ? We have no time to go at large into this, but we will indicate what we mean:—encourage languages, especially French and German, at the early part of their studies ; encourage not merely the book knowledge, but the personal pursuit of natural history, of field botany, of geology, of zoology ; give the young, fresh, unforgetting eye, exercise and free scope upon the infinite diversity and combination of natural colours, forms, substances, surfaces, weights, and sizes—everything, in a word, that will educate their eye or ear, their touch, taste, and smell, their sense of muscular resistance ; encourage them by prizes, to make skeletons, preparations, and collections of any natural objects ; and, above all, try and get hold of their affections, and make them put their hearts into their work. Let them, if possible, have the advantage of a regulated *tutorial*, as well as the ordinary professional system. Let there be no excess in the number of classes and frequency of lectures. Let them be drilled in composition ; by this we mean the writing and spelling of correct, plain English (a matter not of every-day occurrence, and not on the increase),—let them be directed to the best books of the old masters in medicine, and *examined in them*,—let them be encouraged in the use of a wholesome and manly literature. We do not mean popular, even modern literature—such as Emerson, Bulwer, or Alison, or the trash of inferior periodicals or novels—fashion, vanity, and the spirit of the age, will attract them readily enough to all these ; we refer to the treasures of our elder and better authors. If our young medical student would take our advice, and for an hour or two twice a week take up a volume of



Shakespeare, Cervantes, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Cowper, Montaigne, Addison, Defoe, Goldsmith, Fielding, Scott, Charles Lamb, Macaulay, Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, Helps, Thackeray, etc., not to mention authors on deeper and more sacred subjects—they would have happier and healthier minds, and make none the worse doctors. If they, by good fortune—for the tide has set in strong against the *literae humaniores*—have come off with some Greek or Latin, we would supplicate for an ode of Horace, a couple of pages of Cicero, or of Pliny once a month, and a page of Xenophon. French and German should be mastered either before or during the first years of study. They will never afterwards be acquired so easily or so thoroughly, and the want of them may be bitterly felt when too late.

But one main help, we are persuaded, is to be found in studying, and by this we do not mean the mere reading, but the digging into and through, the energizing upon, and mastering such books. Exertion quickens your pulse, expands your lungs, makes your blood warmer and redder, fills your mouth with the pure waters of relish, strengthens and supple your legs; and though on your way to the top you may encounter rocks, and baffling *d'bris*, and gusts of fierce winds rushing out upon you from behind corners, in all truly serious and honest books, difficulties and puzzles, winds of doctrine, and deceitful mists; still you are rewarded at the top by the wide view. You see, as from a tower, the end of all. You look into the perfections and relations of things. You see the clouds, the bright lights, and the everlasting hills on the far horizon. You come down the hill happier, a better, and a hungrier man, and of a better mind.

But, as we said, you must eat the book, you must crush it, and cut it with your teeth and swallow it ; just as you must walk up, and not be carried up the hill, much less imagine you are there, or look upon a picture of what you would see were you up, however accurately or artistically done ; no—you yourself must *do* both.

Philosophy—the love and the possession of wisdom—is divided into two things, science or knowledge ; and a habit, or power of mind. He who has got the first is not truly wise unless his mind has reduced and assimilated it, as Dr. Prout would have said, unless he appropriates and can use it for his need.

The prime qualifications of a physician may be summed up in the words *Capax*, *Perspicax*, *Sagax*, *Efficax*. *Capax*—there must be room to receive, and arrange, and keep knowledge: *Perspicax*—senses and perceptions, keen, accurate, and immediate, to bring in materials from all sensible things ; *Sagax*—a central power of knowing what is what, and what it is worth, of choosing and rejecting, of judging ; and finally, *Efficax*—the will and the way—the power to turn all the other three—capacity, perspicacity, sagacity, to account, in the performance of the thing in hand, and thus rendering back to the outer world, in a new and useful form, what you have received from it. These are the intellectual qualities which make up the physician, without any one of which he would be *mancus*, and would not deserve the name of a complete artsman, any more than protein would be itself if any one of its four elements were missing.

# TRUTH-HUNTING

BY

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL

It is common knowledge that the distinguishing characteristic of the day is the zeal displayed by us all in hunting after Truth. A really not inconsiderable portion of whatever time we are able to spare from making or losing money or reputation is devoted to this sport, whilst both reading and conversation are largely impressed into the same service.

Nor are there wanting those who avow themselves anxious to see this, their favourite pursuit, raised to the dignity of a national institution. They would have Truth-hunting established and endowed.

Mr. Carlyle has somewhere described with great humour the 'dreadfully painful' manner in which Kepler made his celebrated calculations and discoveries; but our young men of talent fail to see the joke, and take no pleasure in such anecdotes. Truth, they feel, is not to be had from them on any such terms. And, why should it be? Is it not notorious that all who are lucky enough to supply wants grow rapidly and enormously rich; and is not Truth a now recognised want in ten thousand homes—wherever, indeed, persons are to be found wealthy enough to pay Mr. Mudie a guinea and so far literate as to be able to read?

What, save the modesty, is there surprising in the demand now made on behalf of some young people, whose means are incommensurate with their talents that they should be allowed, as a reward for doling out monthly or quarterly portions of truth, to live in houses rent-free, have their meals for nothing, and a trifle of money besides? Would Bass consent to supply us with beer in return for board and lodging, we of course defraying the actual cost of his brewery, and allowing him some £300 a year for himself? Who, as he read about 'Sun-spots,' or 'Fresh Facts for Darwin,' or the 'True History of Modesty and Veracity,' showing how it came about that these high-sounding virtues are held in their present somewhat general esteem, would find it in his heart to grudge the admirable authors their freedom from petty cares?

But whether Truth-hunting be ever established or not, no one can doubt that it is a most fashionable pastime, and one which is being pursued with great vigour.

All hunting is so far alike as to lead one to believe that there must sometimes occur in Truth-hunting, just as much as in fox-hunting, long pauses, whilst the covers are being drawn in search of the game, and when thoughts are free to range at will in pursuit of far other objects than those giving their name to the sport. If it should chance to any Truth-hunter, during some 'lull in his hot chase,' whilst, for example, he is waiting for the second volume of an 'Analysis of Religion,' or for the last thing out on the Fourth Gospel, to take up this book, and open it at this page,

we should like to press him for an answer to the following question: 'Are you sure that it is a good thing for you to spend so much time in speculation about matters outside your daily life and walk?'

Curiosity is no doubt an excellent quality. In a critic it is especially excellent. To want to know all about a thing, and not merely one man's account or version of it; to see all round it, or, at any rate, as far round as is possible; not to be lazy or indifferent, or easily put off, or scared away—all this is really very excellent. Sir James Stephen professes great regret that we have not got Pilate's account of the events immediately preceding the Crucifixion. He thinks it would throw great light upon the subject; and no doubt, if it had occurred to the Evangelists to adopt in their narratives the method which long afterwards recommended itself to the author of 'The Ring and the Book,' we should now be in possession of a mass of very curious information. But, excellent as all this is in the realm of criticism, the question remains, How does a restless habit of mind tell upon conduct?

John Mill was not one from whose lips the advice '*Stare super antiquas vias*' was often heard to proceed, and he was by profession a speculator, yet in that significant book, the 'Autobiography,' he describes this age of Truth-hunters as one 'of weak convictions, paralyzed intellects, and growing laxity of opinions.'

Is Truth-hunting one of those active, mental habits which, as Bishop Butler tells us, intensify their effects by constant use; and are weak convictions, paralyzed intellects, and laxity of opinions amongst

the effects of Truth-hunting on the majority of minds? These are not unimportant questions.

Let us consider briefly the probable effects of speculative habits on conduct.

The discussion of a question of conduct has the great charm of justifying, if indeed not requiring, personal illustration; and this particular question is well illustrated by instituting a comparison between the life and character of Charles Lamb and those of some of his distinguished friends.

Personal illustration, especially when it proceeds by way of comparison, is always dangerous, and the dangers are doubled when the subjects illustrated and compared are favourite authors. It behoves us to proceed warily in this matter. A dispute as to the respective merits of Gray and Collins has been known to result in a visit to an attorney and the revocation of a will. An avowed inability to see anything in Miss Austen's novels is reported to have proved destructive of an otherwise good chance of an Indian judgeship. I believe, however, I run no great risk in asserting that, of all English authors, Charles Lamb is the one loved most warmly and emotionally by his admirers, amongst whom I reckon only those who are as familiar with the four volumes of his 'Life and Letters' as with 'Elia.'

But how does he illustrate the particular question now engaging our attention ?

Speaking of his Sister Mary, who, as everyone knows, throughout 'Elia' is called his Cousin Bridget, he says :

‘ It has been the lot of my cousin, oftener, perhaps, than I could have wished, to have had for her associates and mine freethinkers, leaders and disciples of novel philosophies and systems, but she neither wrangles with nor accepts their opinions.’

Nor did her brother. He lived his life cracking his little jokes and reading his great folios, neither wrangling with nor accepting the opinions of the friends he loved to see around him. To a contemporary stranger it might well have appeared as if his life were a frivolous and useless one as compared with those of these philosophers and thinkers. They discussed their great schemes and affected to probe deep mysteries, and were constantly asking, ‘ What is Truth ? ’ He sipped his glass, shuffled his cards, and was content with the humbler inquiry, ‘ What are Trumps ? ’ But to us, looking back upon that little group, and knowing what we now do about each member of it, no such mistake is possible. To us it is plain beyond all question that, judged by whatever standard of excellence it is possible for any reasonable human being to take, Lamb stands head and shoulders a better man than any of them. No need to stop to compare him with Godwin, or Hazlitt, or Lloyd ; let us boldly put him in the scales with one whose fame is in all the churches — with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ‘ logician, metaphysician, bard.’

There are some men whom to abuse is pleasant. Coleridge is not one of them. How gladly we would love the author of ‘ Christabel ’ if we could ! But the thing is flatly impossible. His was an unlovely character. The sentence passed upon him by Mr. Matthew

Arnold (parenthetically, in one of the 'Essays in Criticism')—'Coleridge had no morals'—is no less just than pitiless. As we gather information about him from numerous quarters we find it impossible to resist the conclusion that he was a man neglectful of restraint, irresponsible to the claims of those who had every claim upon him, willing to receive, slow to give.

In early manhood Coleridge planned a Pantisocracy where all the virtues were to thrive. Lamb did something far more difficult; he played cribbage every night with his imbecile father, whose constant stream of querulous talk and fault-finding might well have goaded a far stronger man into practising and justifying neglect.

That Lamb, with all his admiration for Coleridge, was well aware of dangerous tendencies in his character, is made apparent by many letters, notably by one written in 1796, in which he says :

'O my friend, cultivate the filial feelings! and let no man think himself released from the kind charities of relationship; these shall give him peace at the last; these are the best foundation for every species of benevolence. I rejoice to hear that you are reconciled with all your relations.'

This surely is as valuable an 'aid to reflection' as any supplied by the Highgate seer.

Lamb gave but little thought to the wonderful difference between the 'reason' and the 'understanding.'



He preferred old plays—an odd diet, some may think, on which to feed the virtues ; but, however that may be, the noble fact remains, that he, poor, frail boy ! (for he was no more, when trouble first assailed him) stooped down and, without sigh or sign, took upon his own shoulders the whole burden of a life-long sorrow.

Coleridge married. Lamb, at the bidding of duty, remained single, wedding himself to the sad fortunes of his father and sister. Shall we pity him ? No ; he had his reward—the surpassing reward that is only within the power of literature to bestow. It was Lamb, and not Coleridge, who wrote ‘ Dream-Children : a Reverie ’ :

‘ Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W—n ; and as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness and difficulty and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of representment that I became in doubt which of them stood before me, or whose that bright hair was ; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding and still receding, till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech. “ We are not of Alice nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing, less than nothing, and dreams. We are only *what might have been.* ” ’

Godwin ! Hazlitt ! Coleridge ! Where now are their 'novel philosophies and systems'? Bottled moonshine, which does *not* improve by keeping.

'Only the actions of the just  
Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.'

Were we disposed to admit that Lamb would in all probability have been as good a man as everyone agrees he was—as kind to his father, as full of self-sacrifice for the sake of his sister, as loving and ready a friend—even though he had paid more heed to current speculations, it is yet not without use in a time like this, when so much stress is laid upon anxious inquiry into the mysteries of soul and body, to point out how this man attained to a moral excellence denied to his speculative contemporaries; performed duties from which they, good men as they were, would one and all have shrunk; how, in short, he contrived to achieve what no one of his friends, not even the immaculate Wordsworth or the precise Southey, achieved—the living of a life, the records of which are inspiring to read, and are indeed the 'presence of a good diffused'; and managed to do it all without either 'wrangling with or accepting' the opinions that 'hurtled in the air' about him.

But *was* there no relation between his unspeculative habit of mind and his honest, unwavering service of duty, whose voice he ever obeyed as the ship the rudder? It would be difficult to name anyone more unlike Lamb, in many aspects of character, than Dr. Johnson, for whom he had (mistakenly) no warm regard; but they closely resemble one another in their

indifference to mere speculation about things—if things they can be called—outside our human walk ; in their hearty love of honest earthly life, in their devotion to their friends, their kindness to dependents, and in their obedience to duty. What caused each of them the most pain was the recollection of a past unkindness. The poignancy of Dr. Johnson's grief on one such recollection is historical ; and amongst Lamb's letters are to be found several in which, with vast depths of feeling, he bitterly upbraids himself for neglect of old friends.

Nothing so much tends to blur moral distinctions, and to obliterate plain duties, as the free indulgence of speculative habits. We must all know many a sorry scrub who has fairly talked himself into the belief that nothing but his intellectual difficulties prevents him from being another St. Francis. We think we could suggest a few score of other obstacles.

Would it not be better for most people if, instead of stuffing their heads with controversy, they were to devote their scanty leisure to reading books, such as, to name one only, Kaye's ' History of the Sepoy War,' which are crammed full of activities and heroisms, and which force upon the reader's mind the healthy conviction that, after all, whatever mysteries may appertain to mind and matter, and notwithstanding grave doubts as to the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel, it is bravery, truth and honour, loyalty and hard work, each man at his post, which make this planet inhabitable.

In these days of champagne and shoddy, of display of teacups and rotten foundations—especially

too, now that the 'nexus' of 'cash payment,' which was to bind man to man in the bonds of a common pecuniary interest, is hopelessly broken—it becomes plain that the real wants of the age are not analyses of religious belief, nor discussions as to whether 'Person' or 'Stream of Tendency' are the apter words to describe God by; but a steady supply of honest, plain-sailing men who can be safely trusted with small sums, and to do what in them lies to maintain the honour of the various professions, and to restore the credit of English workmanship. We want Lambs, not Coleridges. The verdict to be striven for is not 'Well guessed,' but 'Well done.'

All our remarks are confined to the realm of opinion. Faith may be well left alone, for she is, to give her her due, our largest manufacturer of good works, and whenever her furnaces are blown out, morality suffers.

But speculation has nothing to do with faith. The region of speculation is the region of opinion, and a hazy, lazy, delightful region it is; good to talk in, good to smoke in, peopled with pleasant fancies and charming ideas, strange analogies and killing jests. How quickly the time passes there! how well it seems spent! The Philistines are all outside; everyone is reasonable and tolerant, and good-tempered; you think and scheme and talk, and look at everything in a hundred ways and from all possible points of view; and it is not till the company breaks up and the lights are blown out, and you are left alone with silence, that the doubt occurs to you: What is the good of it all?

Where is the actuary who can appraise the value of a man's opinions? 'When we speak of a man's opinions,' says Dr. Newman, 'what do we mean but the collection of notions he happens to have?' Happens to have! How did he come by them? It is the knowledge we all possess of the sorts of ways in which men get their opinions that makes us so little affected in our own minds by those of men for whose characters and intellects we may have great admiration. A sturdy Nonconformist minister, who thinks Mr. Gladstone the ablest and most honest man, as well as the ripest scholar within the three kingdoms, is no whit shaken in his Nonconformity by knowing that his idol has written in defence of the Apostolical Succession, and believes in special sacramental graces. Mr. Gladstone may have been a great student of Church history, whilst Nonconformist reading under that head usually begins with Luther's Theses—but what of that? Is it not all explained by the fact that Mr. Gladstone was at Oxford in 1831? So at least the Nonconformist minister will think.

The admission frankly made, that these remarks are confined to the realms of opinion, prevents me from urging on everyone my prescription, but, with the two exceptions to be immediately named, I believe it would be found generally useful. It may be made up thus: 'As much reticence as is consistent with good-breeding upon, and a wisely tempered indifference to, the various speculative questions now agitated in our midst.'

This prescription would be found to liberate the mind from all kinds of cloudy vapours which obscure

the mental vision and conceal from men their real position, and would also set free a great deal of time which might be profitably spent in quite other directions.

The first of the two exceptions I have alluded to is of those who possess—whether honestly come by or not we cannot stop to inquire—strong convictions upon these very questions. These convictions they must be allowed to iterate and reiterate, and to proclaim that in them is to be found the secret of all this (otherwise) unintelligible world.

The second exception is of those who pursue Truth as by a divine compulsion, and who can be likened to the nympholepts of old ; those unfortunates who, whilst carelessly strolling amidst sylvan shades, caught a hasty glimpse of the flowing robes or even of the gracious countenance of some spiritual inmate of the woods, in whose pursuit their whole lives were ever afterwards fruitlessly spent.

The nympholepts of Truth are profoundly interesting figures in the world's history, but their lives are melancholy reading, and seldom fail to raise a crop of gloomy thoughts. Their finely touched spirits are not indeed liable to succumb to the ordinary temptations of life, and they thus escape the evils which usually follow in the wake of speculation ; but what is their labour's reward ?

Readers of Dr. Newman will remember, and will thank me for recalling it to mind, an exquisite passage, too long to be quoted, in which, speaking as a Catholic to his late Anglican associates, he reminds them how

he once participated in their pleasures and shared their hopes, and thus concludes :

‘ When, too, shall I not feel the soothing recollection of those dear years which I spent in retirement, in preparation for my deliverance from Egypt, asking for light, and by degrees getting it, with less of temptation in my heart and sin on my conscience than ever before ?’

But the passage is sad as well as exquisite, showing to us, as it does, one who from his earliest days has rejoiced in a faith in God, intense, unwavering, constant ; harassed by distressing doubts, he carries them all, in the devotion of his faith, the warmth of his heart, and the purity of his life, to the throne where Truth sits in state ; living, he tells us, in retirement, and spending great portions of every day on his knees ; and yet—we ask the question with all reverence—what did Dr. Newman get in exchange for his prayers ?

“ I think it impossible to withstand the evidence which is brought for the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius at Naples, or for the motion of the eyes of the pictures of the Madonna in the Roman States. I see no reason to doubt the material of the Lombard Cross at Monza, and I do not see why the Holy Coat at Trèves may not have been what it professes to be. I firmly believe that portions of the True Cross are at Rome and elsewhere, that the Crib of Bethlehem is at Rome, and the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul ; also I firmly believe that the relics of the Saints are doing innumerable miracles and graces daily. I firmly believe that before now Saints have raised the dead

to life, crossed the seas without vessels, multiplied grain and bread, cured incurable diseases, and stopped the operations of the laws of the universe in a multitude of ways.'

So writes Dr. Newman, with that candour, that passion for putting the case most strongly against himself, which is only one of the lovely characteristics of the man whose long life has been a miracle of beauty and grace, and who has contrived to instil into his very controversies more of the spirit of Christ than most men can find room for in their prayers. But the dilemma is an awkward one. Does the Madonna wink, or is Heaven deaf?

Oh, Spirit of Truth, where wert thou, when the remorseless deep of superstition closed over the head of John Henry Newman, who surely deserved to be thy best-loved son?

But this is a digression. With the nympholepts of Truth we have nought to do. They must be allowed to pursue their lonely and devious paths, and though the records of their wanderings, their conflicting conclusions, and their widely-parted resting places may fill us with despair, still they are witnesses whose testimony we could ill afford to lose.

But there are not many nympholepts. The symptoms of the great majority of our modern Truth-hunters are very different, as they will, with their frank candour, be the first to admit. They are free 'to drop their swords and daggers' whenever so commanded, and it is high time they did.



With these two exceptions I think my prescription will be found of general utility, and likely to promote a healthy flow of good works.

I had intended to say something as to the effect of speculative habits upon the intellect, but cannot now do so. The following shrewd remark of Mr. Latham's in his interesting book on the 'Action of Examinations' may, however, be quoted; its bearing will be at once seen, and its truth recognised by many:

'A man who has been thus provided with views and acute observations may have destroyed in himself the germs of that power which he simulates. He might have had a thought or two now and then if he had been let alone, but if he is made first to aim at a standard of thought above his years, and then finds he can get the sort of thoughts he wants without thinking, he is in a fair way to be spoiled.'

## ON BOOKS

BY

LORD IRWIN

The Vice-Chancellor has touched on other important matters this afternoon. His analysis of the present position of affairs and his counsel for the future have been sanely and clearly put to us and deserve the deep consideration of all who have the interests of the people of India at heart. To the youth of India he has given sound advice, which I am sure, in this hall at any rate, has fallen on receptive ears.

It is one of the penalties of youth—as you may suppose—to be given sound advice, and it is perhaps—some of you may also say—one of their privileges to disregard it. But youth will have its turn, and I meanwhile offer no excuse for venturing to add my quota of advice to the Vice-Chancellor's address, though on different and, I fear, less profound lines than his.

I suppose that whenever one, who has himself had the privilege of going through a University course, is again brought into passing contact with University life, he naturally looks back to what for many University men will always remain the happiest time of their lives. Our recollections will vary according to temperament or to the difference in character of our Universities, or in our teachers or in the accidents of

our environment. We all have our regrets, our tale of opportunities lost. If we had our time over again, we might have done more with it. But in these very regrets lies much of our affection for our old University, and herein perhaps to a great extent lies the secret of the hold it retains on our minds in after years. But if there are some things that we cannot recapture, let us be thankful that much remains. Many unforgettable things survive—some small successes here or there, friendships which have ripened with the years, some growing perception of the dignity of true learning and the many-sidedness of truth, teaching a larger tolerance of other men's views, and last, but surely not least, the introduction to the companionship of great thinkers and great writers through our teachers, or through books.

This last, the joy of good books and the pleasure of reading, dates for many of us from our University days. Our early taste was no doubt crude and immature. Our canons of criticism were unformed. But if we were fortunate we felt the influence, whether of tutors or of our own contemporaries, which trained our raw judgment and gave us our first taste of those things on which the mind may browse and rest content. And if to some University student reading may sometimes still conjure up the beckoning ghost of an examiner, let him comfort himself with the thought that many things which begin as a task end by being pure pleasure and recreation. For a few minutes then this afternoon I would invite you to think with me of books; of what they are and what they can be; and of the place that if we are wise we may seek to give them in our general scheme of life. For such

illustration as I may need, however much I deplore my inability to quote from your own Indian literature I am perforce compelled to depend upon English writers. But the conclusions that emerge are not governed by language, and are of general application.

Let us begin by the elementary enquiry of why we desire to read, and ask what are the advantages that we derive from reading. I do not here speak of the more laborious kind of reading which we all know too well, and which in the case of the young, I suppose, at times involves reading rather uninspiring text-books, and in my own consists in reading through even less inspiring official files. It may be that for us both the principal value of such study is that of a moral discipline, of training our mind to work with resolution and perseverance upon subjects that make no powerful appeal to our feelings at the particular moment when our task has to be performed. And it is perhaps the more necessary for those, who are constrained to devote a good deal of their time to this kind of reading, to seek refreshment when they may by recourse to reading of more general character. Such wider reading is the means by which we may at once increase our knowledge and, even more important, supply an often much-needed stimulus to a torpid imagination. We are able at any moment to take our place upon the magic carpet and fly where fancy wills, acquiring new experience, hearing and seeing new things, so that, as our reading leads us through fields hitherto unexplored, we find that our vision widens, and all the things of life assume for us new meaning and significance. It is through books and

through reading them that we are able to give satisfaction to one of the most instinctive impulses of human nature. Man naturally craves for companionship, and society largely reposes upon this human quality. Companionship is essential to the free development of our personality, and we are thus naturally led to the attempt to make contact with other minds, and with minds greater than our own. Books are the ready avenue to this haven of our desire. Indeed it might truly be said that as religion satisfies the yearning of man's heart to make approach to the Divine, so in the lower sphere reading is one of the ways by which we can most easily place ourselves in fellowship with those of our kind who from the vantage-point they have reached can see further than ourselves. ("A good book," wrote Milton, "is the precious life-blood of a master spirit embalmed, and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.") We do well therefore as often as we can to enrich the quality of our own thought by allowing to flow into it the higher thought of men who have in their generation been the interpreters of the deeper things of human feeling.

✓ For many people this presentment in form of their own inarticulate emotions is the great charm of all writing whether poetry or prose. How often are we not brought up sharp, as we read, by a passage or a line—"a jewel five words long"—in which we are almost startled to see crystallised in language some dumb sensation of our own, which we had never succeeded in bringing to such precise definition. In sheer joy how we read and re-read, until we know by heart the lines that so wonderfully as it seems reflect

or bring to light something of our very selves, of which we had scarcely been aware. For those to whom music speaks clearly the sensation obtained through hearing must be analogous to that which I have described. And even if we are not musical, there is much, for us all to gain and enjoy from observance of language and style. We had not perhaps been accustomed to pay much heed to this sort of thing, until one day as we read our ear was caught by the rhythm and sound of words ; we suddenly detected a design for which we were not prepared, and once we had the clue, we saw how the author chose language, now majestic, deliberate, restrained and calm, now rapid, impetuous, rushing like a mountain stream in spate, according to his subject and the effect he was seeking to create.

As the years pass, much of the pleasure of our reading will lie in association : we meet our old friends repeatedly, and though we like to make new ones, most people are intellectually conservative enough to keep a specially warm corner for those which were our first comrades and helped us to grow up.

And one of the precious qualities of this pursuit of reading which I commend to you to-day is that it offers us so infinite a choice from which we can select, as the spirit moves us. Are we heroic ? Let us read again the speech of Henry V before Agincourt, as set in his mouth by the greatest of all English poets :

“ If we are mark'd to die, we are enow  
To do our country loss ; and if to live,  
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.”

Close on that passage, you remember, comes the romance of Exeter's description of the death of the Duke of York and the Earl of Suffolk, lying stricken side by side on the field of battle.

York cries aloud :

“ Tarry, dear cousin Suffolk !  
My soul shall thine keep company to heaven :  
Tarry, sweet soul, for mine; then fly abreast  
As in this glorious and well-foughten field  
We kept together in our chivalry ! ”

And then with what pathos Exeter tells how he tried in vain to stop his tears :

“ But I had not so much of man in me,  
And all my mother came into mine eyes  
And gave me up to tears.”

Or, let us turn to Sir Walter Scott, for preference I think Rob Roy—and though I believe true Scott lovers don't agree with me, Ivanhoe. Or the description, that I can still never read without profound emotion, by Mr. Masfield, of all the transports in the last war setting out with their human freight from Mudros to effect the landing at Gallipoli.

At other times we are dispirited or disturbed, and our mind craves the solace that springs from nature and her works, unmoved as they are amid the din and clatter of the world of man. There is no lack of material of the kind we seek, for in every country and age the order of nature has never failed to make a sure appeal to contemplative minds. The similes of Virgil

that ring most true are those that draw their inspiration from the simple things of life ; bees, a wounded snake, an oak in a storm, a dying flower. Among English writers, birds, flowers and the scenery of the country side have been the subject-matter of some of the things that will live as long as the English language. Wordsworth, Blake, Shelley, Gray, Thomas Hardy, Conrad, Mary Webb—to mention only a few names at random—are people with whom we shall surely desire acquaintance once made to ripen into closer friendship. Allow me, as an illustration of my meaning, to quote to you one sentence from one who is surely not the least in this gallery of immortals. There is a passage in that great unfinished fragment of Stevenson's, "Weir of Hermiston," where he talks of his beloved hills of the Scottish lowlands :

"All beyond and about is the great field of the hills ; the plover, the curlew, and the lark cry there ; the wind blows as it blows in a ship's rigging, hard and cold and pure ; and the hill-tops huddle one behind another like a herd of cattle into the sunset."

To me that description stands out, sharp, clear-cut, poignant, as any landscape on a painter's canvas. Contrast with this picture of the softer tones of a Northern sky another haunting memory of the hard, set colours of the Eastern desert. It is Kinglake's description of the Dead Sea in "Eothen", one of the great books of travel in our language. He speaks of the sea walled up by its "blank hills piled high over hills, pale, yellow, and naked.... There was no fly that hummed in the forbidden air, but, instead, a stillness ; no grass grew from the earth, no weed



peered through the void sand ; but trees borne down by Jordan in some ancient flood, spread out their grim skeleton arms all scorched, and charred to blackness by the heats of the long silent years."

It is interesting to linger over those two pictures, as different in character as a water-colour from an etching and alike only in fidelity to their subjects, and to balance the intellectual delight we can derive from the pure artistry of words with the varying emotions which are aroused within us, even as we can suppose them to have been at work in the master-minds whose words we read.

May I digress for a moment on this matter of artistry as I have such a good text at hand ? The passages I have quoted from Shakespeare and Stevenson are good examples of the power of simplicity in writing. The economy of words both in number and in length—for the monosyllable is the mightiest of all—is one of the secrets of style, and how much should we not all gain could we but take this lesson to heart in our own writing and speech. Official letters would lose some of their terror and oratory would gain in force by being direct. But this is a dangerous topic and I shall be well advised to say no more lest out of my own mouth you should convict me.

I have not the time, nor am I equipped, to do more than point the way towards what I am certain is great enjoyment for nearly all of us, if we only persist until we have got past the initial stages of impatience or unfamiliarity.

And of course within the severe limits of a brief address one cannot hope to do more than touch the fringe of those things which one has learnt to love, and it is not indeed my purpose to-day to do more than arouse in some here, if I can, the desire to forage for themselves among the treasures with which the ground is strewed. Moreover, everyone will have his own favourites, both of subject and treatment, so that each must decide for himself what books he is going to make his companions; we must each make our own anthology and learn by heart the passages of our own choice. But there can be no doubt that by so doing we build for ourselves a store-house from which mind and soul can freely draw.

I began by saying that I meant to give advice to the younger members of my audience. I have ended by rambling rather aimlessly through the fields of reminiscence, more perhaps for my own pleasure than for your advantage. May I conclude by two sentences of practical counsel: (Train yourselves to read in odd moments of leisure, and as you read endeavour constantly to appraise the value according to your own standards of what you are reading. A good book, it has been said, should be more often on the knee than in the hand, for as we read we shall frequently pause to consider, digest, and criticise. Nor let us be obsessed by the fetish of small minds that there is something unworthy in leaving a book that does not interest us unfinished. It is far better to recognise that all books are not for all tempers, or for all times, and turn to something which we can genuinely enjoy. The great thing is to aim at being catholic in taste, to read widely, to think about what we read, and so extend

Our range of thought and knowledge. We shall assuredly gain greatly by the background that we shall gradually form for ourselves, and we shall find, if I mistake not, that there are few sides of our common life that do not gain in colour and interest from the attempt.)

## ON MAKING ONE'S OWN LIBRARY

ANON.

The mother of a school friend was once confiding to me that her husband complained of the number of books his boy was acquiring. "I don't know when he'll have done," he would say. "He's already more books than any one can read. And why doesn't he sell those he's finished with, instead of letting them lumber the house?" "You see," the mother explained to me in mild excuse, "his father doesn't realize that they are his tools." A good saying that, worth thinking about! A good workman chooses his tools carefully and uses them well. He would not like to have to do important work with any one else's. He knows the feel of his own tool and it responds to him as it will respond to no one else. But the comparison breaks down at one point. Tools do not change much, and the tool-bag with which a man proudly began his career may be substantially the same after forty years, when he opens it only to do odd jobs. But nothing can exceed the reverence he feels for it and he surrenders it with mixed feelings of pride and sadness and hope to one whom he trusts, aye, loves.

Mr. Priestley in his novel, *The Good Companions*, has caught and fixed this pride. Mr. Oakroyd is a good Yorkshire workman. Perhaps English people tend to become sentimental about the good workman and speak of him as a fast disappearing institution, but he will survive all changes and is not peculiar to Yorkshire. Mr. Oakroyd is sitting with his son Leonard, when he remembers he has left something at Gatford. Leonard is a barber's assistant.

"Eh, whativver I do, I'll ha' to go back to Gatford. I left my tools."

Leonard stared at him. "Gor, you made me jump, Par! Is that all? Tools!"

"Ay, tools, lad, tools! It's enough an' all. I'm a tradesman, I am, an' I can't set mysen up wi' a pair o' scissors an' a pair o' clippers an' a drop o' hair-oil. I want summat to work wi' when I start. An I been using some o' them tools for twenty year, an' don't you forget it. I wouldn't be wi'out 'em for owt. I'm a tradesman, see—an' if you ask me, ther's noan so damn monny on us left."

"Can you wonder," said Leonard, with all the scorn of a younger and wiser generation, "wages they pay?"

"Happen not," said his father gloomily. "For all that, a chap 'at's learnt his trade an' can use his hands—he isn't a machine an' he isn't a flippin' monkey—he's a man, lad, wages or no wages, a *man*."

Books, on the other hand, are ever growing, and we are growing. Books which would have been unintelligible to us at fourteen delight and interest us in our twenties. And even if we did not grow in capability

and the range of our interests, new books are continually appearing. This year it is a new book on mediæval history, filling in the gaps, illustrating the old knowledge, modifying accepted opinion; or a diary written more than a century ago, through which another voice from the past breaks a long silence and speaks to us. Next year it is a new appreciation of a poet, and if we reverence the poet, any new facts, however small, any new interpretations are welcome. Then there are the creative artists and prophetic writers of our day whom we are privileged to read in the circumstances which have contributed something to the making of the book. I suppose men try to recapture this experience when they buy first editions of the old masters. The kingdom of learning and letters, of which we are all heirs, should expand as time and growth are given us. There is a verse of the Psalmist that at once inspires and challenges: "Thou hast set my feet in a large room." How large we cannot define, but life is too large to enjoy it to the full and learn all that is therein.

Why do we need to collect our own books?—some may say. A friend of mine tells me the private library is an anachronism, out of keeping with the communism of the age and the future. If it be, so much the worse for the spirit of the age and the hope of the future. It implies that a book is like a newspaper, done with as soon as read. And even newspapers have articles worth cutting out and pasting in a commonplace-book. The good book is one to be read again in whole, to be quoted by the page or paragraph when a friend calls, to be referred to at any time for comfort, joy or

instruction, in the middle of our work or when we are going to bed. The true book-lover when he has borrowed a book from the library and found it very good, or been lent a book by a friend and feels his friend's enthusiasm, says: "I must have a copy of that." Nor is this the spirit of mere acquisitiveness. It is as when a man passing through a country sees a fair scene and he longs to return, not only to enjoy the scene again but to try to receive more intimately what his heart could not fully take in on the first view. And the man who travels is not only absent from scenes which are part of his life and from friends whose kindness burns brighter in absence, but he is generally an exile from his books or part of his books. Only when his books are gathered round him in one place and they seem settled, no more to be separated, packed and unpacked, does he feel his home.

And there is more in it than this. They are *his* books, not because he bought them, not because he has read them, but because he has added to them what only he can add. They have suggested to him thoughts and comparisons, illuminated his experience, recalled memories of his other reading, and all this is recorded, perhaps by signs and in a script only fully intelligible to himself, in the margins. What cannot be written there is written at the end of a chapter or within the covers or on any blank page. For this purpose every well-printed book should be allowed fair margins, and the reader should consider what he writes: things personal perhaps, notes scholarly, but only such things as will be useful and significant so long as he uses the book.

In some books there are indications on the fly-leaf whose gift this is, or when it was bought, where read. Thus the book may recall a trek over the snow-line in Kashmir, a cycling holiday in Normandy, or the first train journey to Cambridge. There are school prizes, duly inscribed—that first one, *Robinson Crusoe*; prizes stamped with the college or some other crest; there are sets begun or largely contributed by a particular friend; and perhaps there are a few treasures picked up cheap on a second-hand bookstall. There are books elaborately illustrated and expensively bound, there are neat, inexpensive books of essays, suitable for the pocket, and there are books of last century or two hundred years ago in their original sober covers, which is as it should be. I remember the purchase of Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis* at a railway station when I was not very old and how I read it hastily with growing admiration before the train came in and during the early part of the journey. My copy of Wordsworth's *Prelude* is a First Edition, bound in sober brown and beautiful to read, but I appreciate it no less for the circumstances in which it became mine. A friend and I were walking round David's bookstall at Cambridge when he spotted the book and knowing my regard for Wordsworth asked if I wouldn't like to buy it. I said: "What about you?" He only appeared indifferent, like the friend he is, and I bought the book. Thus a man's library preserves the story of his life; his books are milestones on its course or monuments of friendship, some may tell of pleasures that fell to him and some of studies undertaken.



Dictionaries deserve a note to themselves. As children we thought a dictionary terribly dull. Useful, perhaps, especially if we had no gift for spelling, but what kind of a man must he be who could labour at such a work ! Fit, no doubt, for nothing else, a mere labourer, and one who had too much honesty to remain idle. Yet it was too much to ask that we should feel grateful to such a man. Imagine your feelings if one of your aunts had given you the latest standard dictionary for a Christmas present. It would have been hard, as well as dishonest, to have been polite. I still remember the surprise with which I heard a master rate a boy for having no dictionary in his desk. "You have a Bible," he said, "which you use once a day, and no dictionary which you may need in every period." Dictionaries are not merely labour-saving but light-bringers to all our reading and study. They are also interesting. What provides better reading than a classical dictionary, with its stories, antiquities, its customs, art and history? What is more valuable than a concordance to the Bible or Shakespeare? What is more interesting than a good etymological dictionary? It gives new splendour to a line of Milton, it gives new enjoyment to the columbine when it teaches you to look for the doves perched or fluttering above the flower. To what shall we liken dictionaries ! Surely to an old faithful servant who lights you to your chamber at night. He is a humble man and asks nothing but the satisfaction of his work. His face has a beauty of its own, and when you have crossed the threshold he salaams you courteously.

None of us is too poor to buy books, at least to save up for them. There is an advantage in collecting

our books slowly, even if they never exceed a few hundred. Time is given for a book to take its place properly as a full member of the family ; it comes with a character of its own and preserves its character. Charles Lamb remembers the happy days when he had to save up to buy one book, the anxiety and pleasure of anticipation and how he hugged the book when he carried it home and how he sat up half the night reading it. Your books will give you within the house a bookscape, even as you would desire a landscape from your windows. On some shelves blues and reds will be grouped together like banks of flowers in the woods. Sometimes the colours will mix like a field of forget-me-nots, buttercups, balsam, potentillas high up in the Himalayas in August.

## MRS. JOHNSON

BY

ALICE MEYNELL

This paper shall not be headed "Tetty." What may be a graceful enough freedom with the wives of other men shall be prohibited in the case of Johnson's, she with whose name no writer until now has ever scrupled to take freedoms whereto all graces were lacking. "Tetty" it should not be, if for no other reason, for this—that the chance of writing "Tetty" as a title is a kind of facile literary opportunity; it shall be denied. The Essay owes thus much amends of deliberate care to Dr. Johnson's wife. But, indeed, the reason is graver. What wish would he have had but that the language in the making whereof he took no ignoble part should somewhere, at some time, treat his only friend with ordinary honour?

Men who would trust Dr. Johnson with their orthodoxy, with their vocabulary, and with the most intimate vanity of their human wishes, refuse, with every mark of insolence, to trust him in regard to his wife. On that one point no reverence is paid to him, no deference, no respect, not so much as the credit due to our common sanity. Yet he is not reviled on account of his Thrale—nor, indeed, is his Thrale now seriously reproached for her Piozzi. It is true that Macaulay, preparing himself and his reader "in his well-known way" (as a rustic of Mr. Hardy's

might have it) for the recital of her second marriage, says that it would have been well if she had been laid beside the kind and generous Thrale when, in the prime of her life, he died. But Macaulay has not left us heirs to his indignation. His well-known way was to exhaust those possibilities of effect in which the commonplace is so rich. And he was permitted to point his paragraph as he would, not only by calling Mrs. Thrale's attachment to her second husband "a degrading passion," but by summoning a chorus of "all London" to the same purpose. She fled, he tells us, from the laughter and hisses of her countrymen and countrywomen to a land where she was unknown. Thus when Macaulay chastises Mrs. Elizabeth Porter for marrying Johnson he is not inconsistent, for he pursues Mrs. Thrale with equal rigour for her audacity in keeping gaiety and grace in her mind and manners longer than Macaulay liked to see such ornaments added to the charm of twice "married brows."

It is not so with succeeding essayists. One of these minor biographers is so gentle as to call the attachment of Mrs. Thrale and Piozzi "a mutual affection." He adds, "No one who has had some experience of life will be inclined to condemn Mrs. Thrale." But there is no such courtesy, even from him, for Mrs. Johnson. Neither to him nor to any other writer has it yet occurred that if England loves her great Englishman's memory, she owes not only courtesy, but gratitude, to the only woman who loved him while there was yet time.

Not a thought of that debt has stayed the alacrity with which a caricature has been acclaimed as the

only possible portrait of Mrs. Johnson. Garrick's school reminiscences would probably have made a much more charming woman grotesque. Garrick is welcome to his remembrances ; we may even reserve for ourselves the liberty of envying those who heard him. But honest laughter should not fall into that tone of common antithesis which seems to say, "See what are the absurdities of the great ! Such is life ! On this one point we, even we, are wiser than Dr. Johnson—we know how grotesque was his wife. We know something of the privacies of her toilet-table. We are able to compare her figure with the figures we, unlike him in his youth, have had the opportunity of admiring—the figures of the well-bred and well-dressed." It is a sorry success to be able to say so much.

But in fact such a triumph belongs to no man. When Samuel Johnson, at twenty-six, married his wife, he gave the dull an advantage over himself which none but the dullest will take. He chose, for love, a woman who had the wit to admire him at first meeting, and in spite of first sight. "That," she said to her daughter, "is the most sensible man I ever met." He was penniless. She had what was no mean portion for those times and those conditions ; and, granted that she was affected and provincial, and short, and all the rest with which she is charged, she was probably not without suitors ; nor do her defects or faults seem to have been those of an unadmired or neglected woman. Next, let us remember what was the aspect of Johnson's form and face, even in his twenties, and how little he could have touched the senses of a widow fond of externals. This one loved him, accepted him, made him happy, gave to one of the noblest of all English

hearts the one love of its sombre life. And English literature has had no better phrase for her than Macaulay's : " She accepted, with a readiness which did her little honour, the addresses of a suitor who might have been her son."

Her readiness did her incalculable honour. But it is at last worth remembering that Johnson had first done her incalculable honour. No one has given to man or woman the right to judge as to the worthiness of her who received it. The meanest man is generally allowed his own counsel as to his own wife ; one of the greatest of men has been denied it. " The lover," says Macaulay, " continued to be under the illusions of the wedding-day till the lady died." What is so graciously said is not enough. He was under those "illusions" until he too died, when he had long passed her latest age, and was therefore able to set right that balance of years which has so much irritated the impertinent. Johnson passed from this life twelve years older than she, and so for twelve years his constant eyes had to turn backwards to dwell upon her. Time gave him a younger wife.

And here I will put into Mrs. Johnson's mouth, that mouth to which no one else has ever attributed any beautiful sayings, the words of Marceline Desbordes-Valmore to the young husband she loved : " Older than thou ! Let me never see thou knowest it. Forget it ! I will remember it, to die before thy death."

Macaulay, in his unerring effectiveness, uses Johnson's short sight for an added affront to Mrs. Johnson. The bridegroom was too weak of eyesight " to

distinguish ceruse from natural bloom." Nevertheless, he saw well enough, when he was old, to distinguish Mrs. Thrale's dresses. He reproved her for wearing a dark dress ; it was unsuitable, he said, for her size; a little creature should show gay colours "like an insect." We are not called upon to admire his wife; why, then, our taste being thus uncompromised, do we not suffer him to admire her? It is the most gratuitous kind of intrusion. Moreover, the biographers are eager to permit that touch of romance and grace in his relations to Mrs. Thrale, which they officially deny in the case of Mrs. Johnson. But the difference is all on the other side. He would not have bidden his wife dress like an insect. Mrs. Thrale was to him "the first of womankind" only because his wife was dead.

Beauclerc, we learn, was wont to cap Garrick's mimicry of Johnson's love-making by repeating the words of Johnson himself in after-years,—“It was a love-match on both sides.” And obviously he was as strange a lover as they said. Who doubted it? Was there any other woman in England to give such a suitor the opportunity of an eternal love? “A life radically wretched,” was the life of this master of Letters; but she, who has received nothing in return except ignominy from these unthankful Letters, had been alone to make it otherwise. Well for him that he married so young as to earn the ridicule of all the biographers in England; for by doing so he, most happily, possessed his wife for nearly twenty years. I have called her his only friend. So indeed she was, though he had followers, disciples, rivals, competitors, and companions, many degrees of admirers, a biographer,

a patron, and a public. He had also the houseful of sad old women who quarrelled under his beneficent protection. But what friend had he? He was "solitary" from the day she died.

Let us consider under what solemn conditions and in what immortal phrase the word "solitary" stands. He wrote it, all Englishmen know where. He wrote it in the hour of that melancholy triumph when he had been at last set free from the dependence upon hope. The "notice" of Lord Chesterfield had been too long deferred; it was granted at last, when it was a flattery which Johnson's Court of friends would applaud. But not for their sake was it welcome. To no living ear would he bring it and report it with delight.

He was indifferent, he was known. The sensitiveness to pleasure was gone, and the sensitiveness to pain, slights, and neglect would thenceforth be suffered to rest; no man in England would put that to proof again. No man in England, did I say? But, indeed, that is not so. No slight to him, to his person, or to his fame could have had power to cause him pain more sensibly than the customary, habitual, ready-made ridicule that has been cast by posterity upon her whom he loved for twenty years, prayed for during thirty-two years more, who satisfied one of the saddest human hearts, but to whom the world, assiduous to admire him, hardly accords human dignity. He wrote praises of her manners and of her person for her tomb. But her epitaph, that does not name her, is in the greatest of English prose. What was favour to him? "I am indifferent.....I am known.....I am solitary, and cannot impart it."



## THE PEAL OF BELLS

BY

ROBERT LYND

"Surely I shall not spend my whole life with my own total disapprobation."—Dr. Johnson *on his 72nd Birthday*.

It is a new year, and I have begun a new life. This, I think, is better than merely talking about it. But it is more difficult and brings one just as little credit. No one, indeed, seems to observe the signs of the new life except the man who is leading it. I once had a friend who told his wife that he was beginning a new life, and who went with her to a New Year's Eve party at which he thought he was being particularly abstemious, while she thought he was denying himself nothing. The next morning he complained of a headache. "Of course, you have a headache," she told him, and added: "I thought you said you were going to begin a new life." "Much good there is in beginning a new life," he retorted bitterly, "when you don't even notice it. Last night was the beginning of the new life!" He, I suppose, remembered chiefly the things he had refused at the party, while she remembered chiefly the things he had taken. There is always this personal element in our judgments of ourselves and of each other. We cannot go about, unfortunately, telling everybody about the temptations we

have resisted. As a result, people judge us exclusively by the temptations to which we yield. This is very hard on those of us who are unusually susceptible to temptation and who frequently succumb out of sheer inability to go on resisting for ever.

Knowing myself intimately, I am able to take a more sympathetic view of myself than other people can be expected to take, and I forgive myself for shortcomings that in anybody else would distress me. It is a very unhealthy frame of mind to get into to be always reproaching oneself for one's peccadilloes. I am sure the most cheerful people are those who confine their censures almost entirely to the lapses of their neighbours. This is also, I hold, the more modest attitude. Like other people, I desire a better world, but I have the wit to realize that I alone can do very little to improve things, while other people could improve the globe out of recognition in seven days, if only they would conquer their evil instincts. They are the human race : I am a helpless individual, an onlooker. It would be mere conceit to regard my own faults as being half so serious in their consequences as theirs. Hence I feel an honest glow of pleasure when I see other people behaving well, and I am melancholy when I see, or even hear of, other people behaving badly. I often long to direct them with good advice, and refrain only because I know that friendship itself will not stand the strain of very much good advice for very long. And so, while I am inwardly aching to preach to my errant fellow-creatures, I find myself talking to them instead about diet, diseases, cinemas, Bernard Shaw, and the day on which I backed three

winning horses at Ascot. I doubt, indeed, if I have ever warned even an intimate friend against one of his minor faults. I doubt if any of my friends know that I know their faults. In spite of the pain that our friends' faults cause us, we keep up a fantastic pretence of blindness in order that we may remain tolerable to each other. That is why we have to talk behind people's backs. There is no other chance of talking freely. Then Truth comes out of her well, smiling and without a blush. How good it is to learn the worst about our friends and acquaintances from her impartial lips! "A shrew"—"Drinks, doesn't he?" "He's as mean as the devil"—"He and his wife quarrel in public so"—"The foulest bore in London"—"Always looks as if he had spilled soup down his waistcoat"—"Ruining himself gambling"—"He's got the most appalling swelled head"—"He's such a coward. Always runs away". These are the sort of things it is much better to say *about* a man or woman than to their faces. There is such a thing as tact, which reminds us, for example, that, if we wish to tell the truth about a conceited man, it is better to wait until he has gone out of the room. He will not resent it then. He is so conceited that he will not even guess that we are saying how conceited he is. Some people would condemn this as scandal-mongering. But surely it is better to tell the truth behind people's backs than never to tell it at all.

Besides, if we are to abolish this form of veracity, how are we going to preserve our moral standards? It is by listening to gossip about our friends that we learn to distinguish between right and wrong, and, as we see their reputations being torn more and more

rapturously to pieces, they serve as a kind of awful warning to us, like the penitents confessing their sins at a revival meeting. And they are more fortunate than the penitents, for they do not have to confess their sins : we confess them for them. That grave, rather sad-looking little man—you would never guess what his vice was till some one told you when he had gone, that he had written an " Ode on the Intimations of Insobriety," and that his wife did not guess his secret till one night after he returned home from a party she found him folding up a bath towel and carefully putting it away in a drawer under the impression that it was his evening suit. From tales such as these, we learn what sins to avoid and the importance of being careful, but not too careful. And if the sin of which we are told does not happen to be one of our own favourite sins, to join in condemning it is noble practice in moral enthusiasm. Thus, the miser is a moral enthusiast as he condemns the spendthrift, and the spendthrift as he condemns the miser. The drunkard becomes a moral enthusiast as he tells the truth about the amorist, and the amorist as he tells the truth about the sot. The hypocrite, the sluggard, the glutton, the flatterer of the people, the slum landlord, the sweating employer, the harsh mistress, the lazy workman are all capable of such moral enthusiasm ; and moral enthusiasm is not a thing with which we should part lightly.

Even so, I find it more difficult, as I get older, to confine my moral enthusiasm to the lives of other people, and I grow egotistically concerned about the life I myself am leading. I should not have believed you if you had told me twenty years ago that at my present

age I should not have settled into more admirable and virtuous ways. The faults of a man who had reached or passed middle age used to surprise me when I was a boy, and if I saw in him signs of vanity or fear or greed or ill-temper, I disliked them as something unnatural. It seemed to me extraordinarily easy for a middle-aged man to be virtuous and, indeed, I could hardly imagine what middle-aged men could find to do except behave well. I saw that a number of them abstained from doing so, but in their self-indulgences they seemed to me to be as defiant of common sense as white black-birds. As I grew from boyhood to youth, I came to like many of these self-indulgent elders, but I thought of them chiefly as "rum coves," eccentrics, "old sports", and never as normal human beings who had arrived at years of discretion. When I came to read Horace in class, I learned that it was by no means easy even for a middle-aged man to be virtuous, but I nevertheless remained sure that virtue was more temptingly within reach at the age of forty than at sixteen. And I knew in my bones, though not without sorrow, that Horace was right when he affirmed that there was a stage in life at which it was time for a man to bid good-bye to folly. As I sat under the stern eye of a master, and heard the Latin being translated into schoolboy English, I felt wave after wave of emotion sweeping over me—a wave of self-pity followed by a wave of intense resolve to play the man at some future date—at those curfew lines with which the second Epistle of the second Book of Epistles ends :

Vivere si recte nescis, decede peritis.  
Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti;  
Tempus abire tibi est, ne potum largius aequo  
Rideat et pulset lasciva decentius aetas.

Even to-day, when I can no longer read Latin, and have to guess what "*decede peritis*" means, the lines continually haunt my memory and bring back those feelings of luxurious regret with which a boy many years ago used, in anticipation, to bid farewell to Epicurus and subscribe himself a Stoic. Alas, despite all this, I find myself as I grow older approaching much more nearly to the likeness of one of those "rum coves" I used to laugh at than to the graver portrait of the Stoic I admired.

Yet somewhere in me, I feel sure, a Stoic is buried and awaiting resurrection. "Ye're a young Stoic, Master Y.; ye're a regular Trojan," my nurse used to say to me, when she gave some base medicine in a teaspoonful of raspberry jam and I took it without wincing. I did not know at the time what the words meant, and I don't think that she knew either, but I was pleased by her flattery, which she lavished on me on all occasions of discomfort or danger. If she took me to the dentist's or put a lava-hot poultice on my chest, she always began and ended with: "Ye're a young Stoic, Master Y.; ye're a regular Trojan;" and, though it was not true, it made me feel a better and happier boy. Looking backward, I see in it an unfulfilled prophecy which I surely ought to have set about fulfilling some time ago, and I feel a better and happier man. What if now at last I should adopt the advice of Horace to himself—should listen even to the counsellor in my own breast—and should say to myself gently:

*Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti ;  
Tempus abire tibi est—*

and rise from the tables of pleasure and leave the sweet dishes of folly to younger mouths? There is something attractive to me in the prospect. The bare and frugal board of the Stoics has its own charm. There is no pleasure to surpass that of liberation. Philosophers aver that the chains that bind me are so fragile that they will break at a touch, and indeed that, at a mere wish, I can sever them one by one—indolence, self-indulgence, envy, fear, and folly—and escape. How delightful to achieve a godlike indifference to the things that one knows do not really matter and that do matter to one so much! How else is it possible to become serene—which is the visible grace of wisdom? “A man,” my doctor tells me, “is either a fool or a physician at forty,” and it is also true, I fancy, that at that age a man is either a fool or a philosopher. O miserable choice between the rival pleasures of folly and philosophy! I have tried for a long time to combine them by enjoying the pleasures of folly in practice to-day and the pleasures of philosophy in anticipation to-morrow. Even that, however, becomes a jangling and uneasy compromise with advancing years, and I grow more and more convinced that some time or other, sooner or later—perhaps this very year—the grand break with folly must be made. In facing this fact, I feel that I have taken the first step into a new life, and, so far, the New Year seems to me to have begun excellently well. *Lusisti satis*. True..... Good night, folly! Good morning, virtue!

## THE HARBOUR IN THE NORTH

BY

HILAIRE BELLOC

Upon that shore of Europe which looks out towards no further shore, I came once by accident upon a certain man.

The day had been warm and almost calm, but a little breeze from the south-east had all day long given life to the sea. The seas had run very small and brilliant, yet without violence, before the wind, and had broken upon the granite cliffs to leeward, not in spouts of foam, but in a white even line that was thin, and from which one heard no sound of surge. Moreover, as I was running dead north along the coast, the noise about the bows was very slight and pleasant. The regular and gentle wind came upon the quarter without change, and the heel of the boat was steady. No calm came with the late sunset; the breeze still held, and so till nearly midnight I could hold a course and hardly feel the pulling of the helm. Meanwhile the arch of the sunset endured, for I was far to the northward, and all those colours which belong to June above the Arctic Sea shone and changed in the slow progress of that arch as it advanced before me and mingled at last with the dawn. Throughout the hours of that journey I could see clearly the seams of the deck forward, the texture of the canvas and the natural



hues of the woodwork and the rigging, the glint of the brasswork, and even the letters painted round the little capstan-head, so continually did the light endure. The silence which properly belongs to darkness, and which accompanies the sleep of birds upon the sea, appeared to be the more intense because of such a continuance of the light, and what with a long vigil and new water, it was as though I had passed the edge of all known maps and had crossed the boundary of new land.

In such a mood I saw before me the dark band of a stone jetty running some miles off from the shore into the sea, and at the end of it a fixed beacon whose gleam showed against the translucent sky (and its broken reflection in the pale sea) as a candle shows when one pulls the curtains of one's room and lets in the beginnings of the day.

For this point I ran, and as I turned it I discovered a little harbour quite silent under the growing light ; there was not a man upon its wharves, and there was no smoke rising from its slate roofs. It was absolutely still. The boat swung easily round in the calm water, the pier-head slipped by, the screen of the pier-head beacon suddenly cut off its glare, and she went slowly with no air in her canvas towards the patch of darkness under the quay. There, as I did not know the place, I would not pick up moorings which another man might own and need, but as my boat still crept along with what was left of her way I let go the little anchor, for it was within an hour of low tide, and I was sure of water.

When I had done this she soon tugged at the chain and I slackened all the halyards. I put the cover on the mainsail, and as I did so, looking aft, I noted the high mountain-side behind the town standing clear in the dawn. I turned eastward to receive it. The light still lifted, and though I had not slept I could not but stay up and watch the glory growing over heaven. It was just then, when I had stowed everything away, that I heard to the right of me the crooning of a man.

A few moments before I should not have seen him under the darkness of the sea-wall, but the light was so largely advanced (it was nearly two o'clock) that I now clearly made out both his craft and him.

She was sturdy and high, and I should think of slight draught. She was of great beam. She carried but one sail, and that was brown. He had it loose, with the peak dipped ready for hoisting, and he himself was busy at some work upon her floor, stowing and fitting his bundles, and as he worked he crooned gently to himself. It was then that I hailed him, but in a low voice, so much did the silence of that place impress itself upon all living beings who were strange to it. He looked up and told me that he had not seen me come in nor heard the rattling of the chain. I asked him what he would do so early, whether he was off fishing at that hour or whether he was taking parcels down the coast for hire or goods to sell at some other port. He answered me that he was doing none of those things.

“What cruise, then, are you about to take?” I said.

"I am off," he answered in a low and happy voice, "to find what is beyond the sea."

"And to what shore," said I, "do you mean to sail?"

He answered: "I am out upon this sea northward to where they say there is no further shore."

As he spoke he looked towards that horizon which now stood quite clean and clear between the pier-heads: his eyes were full of the broad daylight, and he breathed the rising wind as though it were a promise of new life and of unexpected things. I asked him then what his security was and had he formed a plan, and why he was setting out from this small place, unless, perhaps, it was his home, of which he might be tired.

"No," he answered, and smiled; "this is not my home; and I have come to it as you may have come to it, for the first time; and, like you, I came in after the whole place slept; but as I neared I noticed certain shore marks and signs which had been given me, and then I knew that I had come to the starting-place of a long voyage."

"Of what voyage?" I asked.

He answered:

"This is that harbour in the North of which a Breton priest once told me that I should reach it, and when I had moored in it and laid my stores on board in order, I should set sail before morning and reach at last a complete repose." Then he went on with eagerness, though still talking low: "The voyage which I was

born to make in the end, and to which my desire has driven me, is towards a place in which everything we have known is forgotten, except those things which, as we knew them, reminded us of an original joy. In that place I shall discover again such full moments of content as I have known, and I shall preserve them without failing. It is in some country beyond this sea, and it has a harbour like this harbour, only set towards the South, as this is towards the North ; but like this harbour it looks out over an unknown sea, and like this harbour it enjoys a perpetual light. Of what the happy people in this country are, or of how they speak, no one has told me, but they will receive me well, for I am of one kind with themselves. But as to how I shall know this harbour, I can tell you : there is a range of hills, broken by a valley through which one sees a further and a higher range, and steering for this hollow in the hills one sees a tower out to sea upon a rock, and high up inland a white quarry on a hill-top ; and these two in line are the leading marks by which one gets clear into the mouth of the river, and so to the wharves of the town. And there," he ended, " I shall come off the sea for ever, and everyone will call me by my name."

The sun was now near the horizon, but not yet risen, and for a little time he said nothing to me nor I to him, for he was at work sweating up the halyard and setting the peak. He let go the mooring knot also, but he held the end of the rope in his hand and paid it out, standing and looking upward, as the sail slowly filled and his craft drifted towards me. He pressed the tiller with his knee to keep her full.

I now knew by his eyes and voice, that he was from the West, and I could not see him leave me without asking him from what place he came that he should set out for such another place. So I asked him : " Are you from Ireland, or from Brittany, or from the Islands ? " He answered me : " I am from none of these, but from Cornwall." And as he answered me thus shortly he still watched the sail and still pressed the tiller with his knee, and still paid out the mooring rope without turning round.

" You cannot make the harbour," I said to him. " It is not of this world."

Just at that moment the breeze caught the peak of his jolly brown sail ; he dropped the tail of the rope ; it slipped and splashed into the harbour slime. His large boat heeled, shot up, just missed my cable ; and then he let her go free, and she ran clear away. As she ran he looked over his shoulder and laughed most cheerily ; he greeted me with his eyes, and he waved his hand to me in the morning light.

He held her well. A clean wake ran behind her. He put her straight for the harbour-mouth and passed the pier-heads and took the sea outside.

Whether in honest truth he was a fisherman out for fishes who chose to fence with me, or whether in that cruise of his he landed up in a Norwegian bay, or thought better of it in Orkney, or went through the sea and through death to the place he desired, I have never known.

I watched him holding on, and certainly he kept a course. The sun rose, the town awoke, but I would not cease from watching him. His sail still showed a smaller and a smaller point upon the sea ; he did not waver. For an hour I caught it and lost it, and caught it again, as it dwindled ; for half another hour I could not swear to it in the blaze. Before I had wearied it was gone.

\* \* \* \* \*

Oh ! my companions, both you to whom I dedicate this book and you who have accompanied me over other hills and across other waters or before the guns in Burgundy, or you others who were with me when I seemed alone—that ulterior shore was the place we were seeking in every cruise and march and the place we thought at last to see. We, too, had in mind that Town of which this man spoke to me in the Scottish harbour before he sailed out northward to find what he could find. But I did not follow him, for even if I had followed him I should not have found the Town.



## NOTES

### GAMES

A. C. BENSON

**Arthur Christopher Benson** was the eldest son of a former Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Benson. He was a master at Eton for eighteen years, and in 1915 became Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. He wrote what is perhaps the most popular English song of our day, "Land of Hope and Glory". The present essay is taken from a popular book of his essays entitled, *From a College Window*. He died in 1925.

Mr. Arthur Mayhew in his book, *The Education of India*, writes: "We may, perhaps, take credit for a threefold contribution to India's scheme of values. In European sports and games, in Shakespeare and in the life of Christ presented in the English version of the Bible, or vernacular renderings of that version, we have given the educated Indian what has appealed to his whole personality, something that interests him not professionally, nor as a means of livelihood, but as a means of happiness". It may be so, and yet as games have had a bad as well as a good effect on English character, so they seem to bring out at present the worst in Indian character.

**Page 1. Decalogue.** It used to be thought that the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, was dictated by God and written down by Moses for the Children of Israel. The literary, historical and scientific criticism of the Bible, set free in our day and known as the Higher Criticism, has taught us not only that Moses is not the author, but to think differently of the way in which God reveals such fundamental rules for mankind. Benson suggests the inevitable, temporary loss of faith and shaking of morality which the changed outlook brings.

**Page 4. Thucydides.** Perhaps the world's greatest historian, lived in Greece in the 5th Century B. C. and wrote the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, the war which divided and embroiled all Greece.

**Euclid.** Greek mathematician, c. 300 B. C., author of the *Elements*. He it was who told a king that there is no royal road to geometry.

**Page 5. a 'Varsity cricket-blue.** A "blue" is a man who represents Oxford or Cambridge against the other university in one of the major games.

**Dr. Johnson.** See the notes on *Mrs. Johnson*.



**Page 6. *pis-aller*.** A French expression; worst, last shift.

**lamentably feeble pleasure.** The generality of mankind will think it feeble.

**Page 7. covert-end** is the end of a covert or cover, i. e., a wood used as a breeding ground for foxes or pheasants.

**Page 8. my own power of enjoyment is far deeper.** This idea is often expressed in Wordsworth, e. g., in *Tintern Abbey*, where he speaks of the "coarser pleasures" of his boyish days, the passionate feelings of later years, and the deep enjoyment of manhood. Or compare these lines of the *Immortality Ode*:

I love the brooks which down their channels fret,  
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they.

**crowned with glory and worship**, an echo from Psalm VIII.

**Page 9. the wisdom of the serpent...the Pauline doctrine of adaptability.** There are two Biblical allusions here: S. Matthew X, 16 and 1 Corinthians IX, 19-22. In the first Christ enjoins worldly wisdom on his disciples, and in the second S. Paul says he adapts himself to the varieties of mankind in his ministry to win them to his message.

**playing at horses.** A game enjoyed by all English children and costing no more than a piece of string, tied to each arm of the "horse" for reins. One is the horse and one drives, or you may have two horses "belted".

**suffragan.** A bishop who oversees a diocese may have one or more assistant bishops, known as suffragans. Gaiters are part of the episcopal uniform.

**Blind-man's Buff.** A noisy indoor game. One is blindfolded with a handkerchief and tries to catch and identify the others.

**Page 10. Jeremiah.** In popular speech a pessimistic denunciatory person is sometimes called a Jeremiah. The reference is to the sternness of the old Hebrew prophet.

**Page 11. sapphics and alcaics.** Greek verse forms, so called from their reputed inventors, Sappho and Alcaeus, great lyrical poets c. 600 B. C.

## THE SON OF SUCCESS

ARNOLD BENNETT

**Mr. Bennett**, a living author, was born in 1867. He is best known for his novels and plays. Among his best novels are *The Old Wives' Tale*, *Clayhanger*, *Hilda Lessways* and *These Twain*. Perhaps it is his chief praise that he makes the familiar interesting.

This essay is from a collection of Mr. Bennett's essays entitled, *The Savour of Life*.

**Page 15. Belgrave-square. Bedford-square.** Rich residential places in London.

## THE LITTLE JOYS OF MARGARET

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

This essay is from a book entitled, *Little Dinners with the Sphinx*. The author, who is still living and was born in 1866, is best known as a poet, and most modern anthologies contain poems of his. He has also written literary criticism and prose fancies.

**Page 19. Paragraph 2** cf. the same thought in Milton's *Comus* 11.745-55.

Beauty is nature's brag, and must be shown  
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,  
Where most may wonder at the workmanship :  
It is for homely features to keep home,  
They had their name thence, coarse complexions  
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply  
The sampler, and to teize the huswives wooll.  
What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,  
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn ?  
There was another meaning in these gifts ;  
Think what, and be adviz'd; you are but young yet.

**Page 20. An old maid**, as the words imply, is a woman who has come to old age without marrying. The word has an atmosphere of its own, as it is sometimes used unkindly, more often with a touch of quaint reverence.

**Page 21. colossal figures of antiquity**...cf. Goldsmith's simile describing the village parson :

As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,  
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,  
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

**Page 22. ante-natal mystery.** Our life is lived between two mysteries the unknown beyond death and the unknown before our birth or ante-natal mystery. Because our parents were here before our "time" began, therefore they seem types of the eternal. The very Latin phrase, ante-natal, is suggestive of mystery ; it is not homely English.

**Page 22. Homer.** First of the Greek poets and author of the epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. His heroes and heroines belong to another world than ours, being half divine in their parentage, and consequently helped and guided by the gods and goddesses.

**As the old mother sits.**... Pause over this sentence to realize the true and telling effect the writer has achieved with so few words. Why a silver thread? Why are eyes mentioned?

**Page 23. old enough to be in fashion again.** A popular saying which gives the true place of fashion in dress.

**Page 25. sunset of classic paintings.** Why 'sunset'? cf. these lines from Robert Bridge's *Testament of Beauty*:

Our fathers travel'd Eastward to revel in wonders

Where pyramid pagoda and picturesque attire

Glow in the fading sunset of antiquity.

**bourgeois.** A French word incorporated into English. Literally it means 'of the town', 'belonging to the middle class', hence 'commonplace'.

**Page 26. vestal virgin.** Vestal virgins were the priestesses dedicated to the service of Veesta, the Roman goddess of fire and the domestic hearth. They were unmarried, highly honoured, and their chief duty was to keep the fire burning in her temple. Shakespeare uses the word 'vestal' to signify virgin in the thrice-famous passage: "a fair Vestal throned by the west."

**Madonna-like.** Madonna is commonly used of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Christ. Among the paintings of the Old Masters are many Madonna with Child pictures.

**dream-children.** See the note on Charles Lamb, page 169.

**Page 27. prima donna.** A world famous singer.

**Page 28. I shall believe you have....** Notice Margaret's wilful, playful misunderstanding of her mother.

**Page 29. raison d'être.** Another French term that comes easily to the lips of an Englishman because we have no like phrase so neat. Her 'cause, excuse for living.'

**short journey to heaven.** Why short?

## AGRA AND THE TAJ

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

**Sir Edwin Arnold** is known to all the world as the author of *The Light of Asia*; his *Song Celestial*, a translation of the Bhagvad Gita, is not so well known. He came out to India as principal of the Government Sanskrit

College at Poona. Later he worked in England as a journalist, revisited India, and the present essay is taken from his *India Revisited*. He died in 1904.

**Page 37. Bactrian encampment.** At the end of the 14th century Timur descended upon the Punjab from these parts, now Turkestan.

**Page 38. kibitka.** A circular tent.

**Page 39. odalisques.** From the Turkish, meaning properly slaves of the wives of the Sultan, often used for women of the harem.

**Page 41. M. Bernier.** A French traveller (1625—88). For nine years he was physician at Aurangzebe's court and corresponded with the French minister, Colbert. He showed himself a careful historian.

**Page 45. Yet if the Taj rose....** Do you feel how much is gained by the contrast made in this sentence?

**Page 46. Israfel.** The angel who will blow the last trumpet on the day of Resurrection.

## THE PROCESSION

JOHN GALSWORTHY

**Mr. Galsworthy**, born 1867, has written novels and dramas. His *Foreyte Saga*, pictures late Victorian, Edwardian and post-war life in England. The essays chosen in this selection are complementary, being descriptive of town and country respectively. Notice the care with which the pictures are drawn and the telling detail here and there introduced. The girl in the front of the procession "in a blouse and skirt gaping behind." Then the description of the workers "hammering, closing the link and, without a second's pause, thrusting the iron rod again into the glow". For those who know the scene it expresses the monotony of the task.

In the first piece Galsworthy expresses no political opinions directly. So it is in his dramas. He refuses to take sides with masters or men, and therefore he is better able to express with pitiless truth yet human love all that is degrading and prejudiced. And the reader, if he has ears to hear, judges all the time, and as he judges the state of society into which he has been born, is uplifted to do something to purify it. "Never a second when the thin smoke of the forges, and of those lives consuming slowly in front of them, did not escape from out of the dingy, whitewashed spaces past the dark rafters, away to freedom." He makes you feel the pity of it. But stronger still is the feeling of the goodness, the unconquerable joy of men and women even under such conditions.

Both essays are from *The Inn of Tranquillity and other Impressions*.

**Page 48. immortal comrades.** What is the significance of this word 'immortal'?

**Page 49. Provence.** In Southern France where the peasants are neighbours to the sun.

**magpie, jay-like flock.** The magpie and the jay are birds of the crow family. In their plumage black and white beautifully contrast, but the other colours mentioned here are also seen, especially in the tail of the pie. They are sprightly, chattering birds, and the magpie is commonly used to describe a mixed gathering of talkative people.

**Page 51. visiting sun.** What is the significance of the adjective here? **the worst served creatures in the Christian world.** A Christian world ought to be a world that serves well. S. John XIII.

**Page 52. a little yellow flame.** Compare the sign of new life and joy given to the first Christians, tongues of fire. Acts II, 3.

**Page 53. All the elaborated glory....** Think out the full meaning of this last sentence in which Galsworthy says: life, the commonest life and beaten under in our civilization, surpasses art, vision and romance.

### BUTTERCUP NIGHT

JOHN GALSWORTHY

**Page 55. buttercups.** Small yellow flowers, loved by children growing profusely in English meadows and found in the Himalayas. Notice the metaphors here, each suitable and therefore beautiful. The flowers are like cups from the hand of the Great Potter (Jeremiah XVIII). A patine or paten has a beautiful and most sacred association. It is the plate which holds the consecrated bread, or Body of Christ, in Christian worship. From it, therefore, men receive the Bread of Life. Shakespeare in the *Merchant of Venice* (Act V, Scene 1) had compared the stars with patines. Lorenzo says:

Look, how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.

**Page 57. Corot.** A French landscape painter of the last century. When you have recognized his work you can always identify it—the work of a poet in the presence of Nature who gives you his dream.

**Pan.** The author here more or less identifies Pan with "the spirit of all Nature." He is an elusive Greek god, worshipped by herdsmen, hunters and fishermen, and he haunted the mountains, caves and springs.

**Page 58. the "Dying Gaul."** A well known piece of sculpture, now at Rome, probably representing the death of a Gallic chief and wrought to celebrate the victories of the great King of Pergamum, Attalus I, c. 200 B. C.

Byron's description in *Childe Harold IV*, 140—1, gives some idea of the sculpture, though he identifies the dying figure with the gladiatorial games—

I see before me the Gladiator lie :  
 He leans upon his hand—his manly brow  
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
 And his droop'd head sinks gradually low.  
 And through his side the last drops ebbing slow  
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
 Like the first of a thunder shower ; and now  
 The arena swims around him—he is gone,  
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes  
 Were with his heart, and that was far away ;  
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,  
 There were his young barbarians all at play,  
 There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,  
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—  
 All this rushed with his blood—shall he expire  
 And unavenged ? Arise ! ye Goths, and glut your ire !

**Page 58. frozen beauty.** Explain this phrase, or better, picture the scene to yourself.

**Page 59. zurr.** Z is often used for S in West Country dialect.

**Page 60. as passes show.** When Hamlet is bid to put off his mourning for his father, he first notices his outward signs of grief, then adds :

But I have that within which passeth show,  
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

## A NIGHT AMONG THE PINES

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

**Stevenson** would, by common consent, rank first among the writers in this anthology. He is already a classic ; his poetry, romances and essays are widely read and quoted. There is a charm in his style which corresponds with the romantic story of his life. But there is more than charm ; there is an attitude to life. Admirers of Stevenson readily catch his brave glad spirit and art of living expressed in *The Celestial Surgeon*

and his *Morning Prayer*. He lived the last four years of his life at Vailima in Samoa, owing to ill-health, and when he died, in 1894, his body was carried by 60 Samoans to the summit of the peak of Vaea where it was buried.

The extract here chosen is from his very popular work, *Travels with a Donkey*. This describes a twelve days' walk he took of upwards of a hundred and twenty miles in the Cevenne Mountains in Southern France. He slept by night in a sleeping-sack and had for companion to carry his baggage the donkey Modestine. It is a descriptive piece, yet observe how at every turn it is personal. We are led to enjoy the night in the open, the pictures, the waking and the departure in company with Stevenson and through his eyes. In this way the description warms into life and holds our imagination. Notice, too, the care with which Stevenson chooses his words and shapes his phrases. The language is simple but it has the suggestiveness of poetry; this is the charm of Robert Louis Stevenson. Here are some examples—"All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely; even as she takes her rest, she turns and smiles." "Many of the stars had disappeared; only the stronger companions of the night still burned visibly overhead." And we both feel the moving coolness passing down the glade from time to time and catch the glint of his ring in the starlight.

**Page 63. nymph, faunus.** Greek and Italian divinities, respectively, the former inhabiting the various forms of Nature, the latter presiding over agriculture and farming.

**Page 64. Montaigne.** French moralist of the sixteenth century. See the first paragraph of my Foreword.

**Bastille.** The state prison in Paris, symbol of absolutism and therefore destroyed by the French on the outbreak of the Revolution. The day of its fall, July 14th, is observed as a national festival in France. This sentence should be compared with *Buttercup Night*.

**Page 65. Chasserades.** Stevenson had slept here the night before. "There were four beds in the little upstairs room; and we slept six. But I had a bed to myself and persuaded them to leave the window open."

## A PIECE OF CHALK

G. K. CHESTERTON

Whether you like Chesterton or not, you have to admit that among living writers he is unique. When he is not at his best, his style is so paradoxical that it becomes a mannerism but in such an essay as the following

one sees that he is full of flashing, glad, common truths and that he can express them in an enjoyable, unforgettable way. He has written books on art, poetry, religion and history, as well as many essays. There is always mysticism in his writing, if that means to trace the spiritual in what is common and tangible. By his exuberance and by his living imagination he is able to interpret one side of the Middle Ages and commend the Roman Catholic Church, of which he is a member. He is a healthy influence in our day in lightening the solemn weight which science has laid upon us.

This essay is from *Tremulous Trifles*.

**Page 70. primal twilight of the first toil of creation.**...You are expected to imagine, religiously or scientifically, a time before the sun rose upon our earth, or trees and flowers budded, when light was vanquishing the darkness.

**Page 71. seraphim.** Angels, the burning, consuming attendants on the Holy One of Israel. See Isaiah VI.

**angry crimson.** Why are the saints dressed in angry crimson ?

**Wordsworth.** England's great poet of Nature (1770—1850). Mentioned here because since his time and through his influence Nature has been treated as a subject for poetry more consciously and generally by the poets.

**They painted the white robes.**...Notice the suitability of the colouring here. Virgins should be dressed in spotless white; paladins, or knights, bore richly painted shields; Robin Hood, semi-historical, semi-legendary, and his outlawed men of Norman-Angevin England, were dressed in green to hide among the leaves; and blue is the colour of faithfulness.

**Page 72. Apollo.** The Greek god of the sun, of poetry and inspiration.

**Page 73. Joan of Arc.** The French peasant girl who delivered her country from despair and the English. She bore a white banner of her own design embroidered with lilies and her sword shone bloodless. But this does not exhaust the word 'flaming' which refers more to her spirit than her appearance.

**In a sense our age.**...Chesterton scorns the pagan custom of wearing black at funerals. It is because we are pessimistic and faithless that we do not wear the Christian colour of white.

**arum lilies.** Large lilies of wonderful purity, used for altar decoration and for funerals.



## SECRET OF THE CHARM OF FLOWERS

W. H. HUDSON

It has sometimes been said that a man who cannot read an author's biography in his work will never be able to learn it from mere facts about the author. How much can you learn of Hudson from this essay? You cannot learn that he died in England in 1922, having lived the first years of his life (1841-74) in South America. But you can learn that he wrote about birds and nature. You can learn that his temperament developed as you might expect a naturalist's temperament to develop, that he had prejudices you might expect, against mere book-learning, the large house and the large garden. You can hear his opinion on war in one beautiful and startling sentence.

Hudson was both naturalist and man of letters, and his achievement is as praiseworthy as it is rare. He is not so technical that he sets the teeth on edge, nor so popular (with bad illustrations) that he offends every man who respects birds and flowers. But he writes as one who knows the birds on the wing and in the bush, in their plumage and by their notes. Most of the flowers he mentions in this essay may be seen by any one who will walk in the Simla Hills, but the interest of the essay is not wholly lost for one who should never know the blue geranium and the buttercup, the wild rose and the forget-me-not. The main thought of his essay is worth thinking upon, and he leaves you with questions to be answered: What are favourite flowers with Indians and why?

Mark the easy and general introduction, suitable to the subject and well proportioned. You are into the subject before you realize it. The title of the book from which this is abstracted is *Birds and Man*.

**Page 78. pansy.** One name of the flower under discussion. It comes from the French "pensée" and means thought. Ophelia offers pansies.

There is pansies, that's for thoughts.

**Page 79. Guido.** Guido Reni of Bologna, Italian painter, died 1642.

**Page 80. sit in thick darkness.** A Biblical echo. S. Luke 1, 79.

**Page 82. would not smell sweet**—An echo of the concluding couplet of Shirley's well-known poem, *Death the Leveller*.

Only the actions of the just  
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

**Page 82. familiar verse from *Cymbeline*.** (Act IV, Scene 2). It is worth quoting the accompanying verses. Arviragus says of Imogen :

With fairest flowers

Whilst summer lasts and I live here, Fidel,  
I'll sweeten thy sad grave : thou shalt not lack  
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose, nor  
The azured harebell, like thy veins, no, nor  
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander  
Out-sweeten'd not thy breath.

**Page 84. Thomas Carew.** A Jacobean poet. 'Conceits', or far fetched comparisons, were the fashion of the age. Many of these now seem to us in bad taste but in their own day were enjoyed for their cleverness and ingenuity. The quatrain quoted is the first verse of a song and is an example of a pretty and not displeasing conceit. Why does Hudson say one can forgive it ?

**Page 85. "Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower."** The first line of Burns' poem, *To a Mountain Daisy*.

**Page 86. Richard Jefferies.** Another modern writer on natural things.

**Page 87. Ossian.** A body of Scottish and Irish literature which flourished during the Middle Ages goes by this name. In the eighteenth century James Macpherson collected, edited and translated much of this literature under the title, *Poems of Ossian*. It is disputed whether Ossian is or is not a historical figure.

**Tennyson.** Poet Laureate, the great poet of the second half of last century.

**Page 88. Gerardo.** John Gerardo, an Elizabethan botanist and surgeon, who first published a catalogue of the plants in his garden and later the *Herball*.

**Page 89. coverts.** See the note on covert-end, page 158.

**Page 90. Cuvier.** A Frenchman, the most distinguished naturalist of his day, died in 1832.

**Page 92. It was nothing more than a pretty fancy.** Do you agree ?

**Page 93. Sir John Forns.** Elizabethan writer on heraldry, author of *The Blazon of Gentry* (1586).

### " WITH BRAINS, SIR "

DR. JOHN BROWN

**John Brown** 1810—1882) was a Scottish physician and author. His best known work is *Rab and his Friends*. The present essay is from *Horae*

*Subsecivae* (i. e., leisure hours). Two volumes of essays appeared under this name, the first dealing chiefly with the equipment and duties of a physician.

**Page 95. Opie, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Etty and Wilkie** (mentioned later) were British painters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Sir Joshua Reynolds was first President of the Royal Academy, founded in 1768. By schools, and exhibitions the Academy promotes the fine arts of painting, sculpture and architecture. The number of the Academicians is fixed at 40.

**Page 97. Apollyon.** *Destruction.* King of the Bottomless Pit, referred to in the Bible and an enemy against whom Christian has to fight.

**Page 98. *quercus robur*.** The most celebrated of the oaks, the British oak.

**Hippocrates, Sydenham, etc.** Physicians and surgeons of different countries and centuries. The first, Hippocrates, deserves a special note. The most celebrated physician, and writer on medicine of antiquity, he died at the age of 104. He is the author of the aphorism: "Life is short and Art is long; the occasion fleeting, experience deceitful, and judgment difficult."

**The noble and sacred science, i. e., medicine.**

*qua medici, i. e., as doctors.*

**Page 102. Shakespeare, Cervantes, etc.** Draw up your own list of authors, Eastern and Western, to whom a student should turn "for an hour or two twice a week."

*literae humaniores, i. e., the humanities, or literary studie, and the name given to the school of classical studies at Oxford.*

*débris, ruined, broken remains.*

**winds of doctrine, i. e., changing, perplexing opinions.** It is a quotation from Ephesians iv, 14.

**Page 103. *manus*, i. e., having the use of only one hand.**

## TRUTH-HUNTING

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL

**Mr. Birrell's** essays, like A. C. Benson's, are very popular. The reason for this is easily felt in the style and in the ideas; they appeal to the Englishman as sane, straightforward, useful and inspiring. Many of the essays which accompany this in *Obiter Dicta* are literary, but Mr. Birrell has come into touch with life through politics, especially Irish politics, in which he played a part until the setting up of the Irish Free State.

**Page 104. Mr. Carlyle.** Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), one of the great prophets of the last century in England.

**Kepler.** John Kepler, mathematician to the Emperor, died in 1630. He welcomed the discoveries of Galileo, his studies led to the use of the astronomical telescope, and he is to be regarded as one of the founders of modern astronomy. Though crippled by bad health his industry was enormous.

**Mr. Mudie.** Mudie's library, from which subscribers receive books by post, is still in existence.

**Page 105. covers are being drawn.** For explanation of this metaphor see the note on covert end, page 158.

**Fourth Gospel.** The Gospel which goes by the name of S. John in the New Testament, but scholars dispute its authorship.

**Page 106. Sir James Stephen.** Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, died in 1859.

**'The Ring and the Book'.** By Robert Browning (1812-89). Count Guido has a murder committed for which he is eventually put to death. A number of people, in one way or another connected with the murder, from Guido himself to the Pope who confirms the sentence of death, discuss the case, and moralize over it, each from his own point of view. Some may know a little more of the facts, some a little less, but each has his own point of view.

**John Mill.** John Stuart Mill, great political and philosophical thinker of last century. His name is associated with Utilitarianism. All his life he was true to his father's saying that "One of the grand objects of education should be to generate a constant and anxious concern about evidence."

*'Stare super antiquas vias.'* Tread the old ways.

**Bishop Butler.** Joseph Butler, great English theologian during the first half of the eighteenth century. His great work is entitled, *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Course and Constitution of Nature*. He lived in a time of speculation when reason was set up as the touchstone of all knowledge, and Butler maintained that human knowledge is necessarily limited, and man must live by probability as well as reason.

**Page 107. Charles Lamb.** I need hardly spoil the author's account with notes; he even gives you the period when he lived. Most people who read English literature know the *Essays of Elia* (Lamb's pseudonym). There was insanity in Lamb's family, the shadow of it hung over Lamb himself; and his sister, Mary, in a fit of insanity stabbed her mother. Lamb became the protector of his sister and because of the malady,

refrained from marrying Alice Winterton. It is a heroic story. The *Dream Children*: A Reverie, beginning 'My little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about—is a might have been. Read it.

**Page 107. Gray and Collins.** They were contemporaries in the eighteenth century—we might say the only lyrical poets in England in that century until the Romantic Revival towards the end.

**Miss Austen's novels.** Jane Austen wrote only half a dozen novels which in their charm as well as in their limitations are unlike any thing else in English literature. Those who admire her are very devoted. She died in 1817.

**Page 108. It has been the lot...**The quotation is from 'Mackery End' in the *Essays of Elia*. Read it.

**Godwin, Hazlitt, Lloyd.** William Godwin's chief work is the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness*. He was a political thinker whose influence on young men, particularly Shelley, was very strong. As a bookseller he published some of Lamb's books. Hazlitt is one of the most eminent of English critics and essayists, a close friend of Lamb. Charles Lloyd and Lamb both had poems included in a book of *Poems* by Coleridge (1797).

**whose fame is in all the churches.** Compare 2 Corinthians VIII, 18.

**Samuel Taylor Coleridge.** It must be said that Mr. Birrell gives only one side of Coleridge's story. It would be more just to number Coleridge among those "who pursue Truth as by a divine compulsion," and Wordsworth said of him: "The only wonderful man I ever knew was Coleridge." And Lamb wrote: "He was my fifty years old friend without a dissension. Never saw I his likeness nor probably the world can see again. I seemed to love the house he died at more passionately than when he lived. I love the faithful Gilmans more than while they exercised their virtues towards him living. What was his mansion is consecrated to me a chapel." The following few facts will explain allusions in the text. He was at school with Lamb and there is a reference to this in one of Lamb's essays, *Christ's Hospital*. At the age of twenty-two Coleridge and the poet Southey stirred by the French Revolution, planned an utopia on the banks of the Susquehanna, North America, to be called Pantisocracy (Rule by all). Coleridge had many good friends who helped him from time to time, and in 1798 he received an annuity from friends named Wedgwood. His deep philosophical interests were stimulated by a visit to Germany with the Wordsworths which lasted 14 months. Then for 15 years he was addicted to opium and was helped in getting free by a Mr. Gillman who lived at Highgate. For the rest of his life Coleridge lived here, the guru of many disciples. One of his chief prose works is *Aids to Reflection*.

**Page 111. 'hurtled in the air'** (*Julius Caesar* Act 11, Scene 2).

**Dr. Johnson.** See the essay, *Mrs. Johnson*, and notes thereto.

**Page 112. St. Francis.** It ought not to be necessary in India to tell of the Italian saint of the 13th century who took for his bride Poverty. It has seemed to the popular imagination that Christ has lived in him more than in any other person down the centuries.

**Kaye's 'History of the Sepoy War.'** Sir John William Kaye (died 1876) served India first as a soldier, then in the India Office. He wrote histories and novels.

**Page 114. Mr. Gladstone.** The famous Victorian Prime Minister was a loyal supporter of the established Church of England and therefore emphasized the importance and necessity of the Church's sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He also valued the doctrine of Apostolical Succession, that is the transmission of authority and grace from bishop to bishop down the centuries from the days of the Apostles. The movement in England which re-established these doctrines and brought them into prominence is known as the Oxford Movement. The Oxford Movement did not really begin until 1833 when Gladstone had left Oxford, nevertheless he came strongly under its influence. The Nonconformists, on the other hand, are less ecclesiastical and sometimes speak as if Church History begins with the Reformation in 1517. In this year Luther affixed his Theses, condemning the sale of pardons and defining penitence and the condition of forgiveness to the door of the Church at Wittenberg.

**Page 115, all this unintelligible world..** From Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*.

**nympholepts.** In Greek religion the nymphs were the divine spirits who inhabited trees and springs and mountains. The mortal who looked upon a nymph lost his human wit but became possessed of a super-human wisdom or enthusiasm.

**Dr. Newman.** John Henry Newman, the leader and inspirer of the Oxford Movement, who seceded from the Church of England in 1845 and became a most distinguished theologian of the Roman Church. He was made a cardinal in 1879.

**Page 117. Oh, Spirit of Truth, where wert thou....** Compare Milton's *Lycidas* l. 49.

## ON BOOKS LORD IRWIN.

This essay is the major part of an address given by Lord Irwin as Chancellor of the University of Delhi at its eighth Convocation, 21st March, 1930. The English is simple and dignified. It is a friendly style, adorned with illustrations and practical suggestions, and the essay affords a good example of the writer sharing his thoughts, delights, and experience with the reader.

**Page 122. minds greater than our own.** The idea of this sentence is the same which inspired Ruskin's great speech on books, *Kings' Treasuries*.

**Milton.** The quotation is from his address against licensing the press, *Areopagitica* (1644).

**Page 123. Henry V before Agincourt.** The quotations are from *Henry V* (Act IV, Scenes 3 and 6).

**Page 124. Virgil.** The greatest name in Latin poetry (70—19 B. C.) One of his poems the *Georgics* is descriptive of country life, but through all his poetry he has created an expanded simile which can only be characterized as Virgilian, though Milton learned the art from him. ✓

**Page 125. Thomas Hardy, Conrad, Mary Webb.** All three are modern English novelists; Conrad died in 1924, Hardy in 1928. Hardy is pre-eminently the novelist of country life in South-West England, and in his novels the forms and aspects of Nature become almost *dramatis personae*. Conrad was a writer of the sea.

**"Weir of Hermiston."** Stevenson was dictating this novel on the day he died.

**Kinglake.** Alexander William Kinglake (1809-91). *Eothen* is a record of his travels in the East when still a young man of 26. His great work is *The History of the Crimean War*.

## ON MAKING ONE'S OWN LIBRARY

### ANON.

**Page 129. Mr. Priestley.** J. B. Priestley, a young rising novelist, critic and essayist. *The Good Companions*, published 1929, the tale of a travelling concert-party, has deservedly won great popularity.

**Page 133. Oscar Wilde.** (1856—1900). Poet, playwright, essayist. *De Profundis* is a personal revelation evoked by his life in prison.

**Wordsworth's Prelude.** Published 1850. It is an epic of a new order; the story of the growth of a poet's mind.

**Page 134. Milton.** John Milton (1608-74), author of the English epic, *Paradise Lost*. His poetry is so full of Latin words and constructions that often a Latin dictionary is the best help to understanding his exact meaning, but by these unfamiliar constructions and resonant words he created a style majestic in tone and free to obey his vast imagination.

**columbine.** This flower, to be found in the hills, is pendent and its petals seem to form five doves beak to beak and with wings spread. The name is derived from the Latin 'columba', a dove.

## MRS. JOHNSON

## ALICE MEYNELL

**Mrs. Meynell** died in 1922, leaving poems and essays of exquisite feeling and workmanship. It is sometimes objected rightly that she is obscure, and certainly she will never rank as a popular author, but to the judicious it will often seem that her obscurity, or rather brevity in style, is essential to her art. Hers is the true nervous style (of which one often hears), each phrase having its own thought and its own feeling, and the high emotional effects are led up to, yet they surprise and please.

One may follow her, however, in this essay without any notes. It soon appears that literary critics, with Macaulay at their head in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, have written despitely of Dr. Johnson's wife, and most people know enough of the Doctor's person and habits to understand many of the allusions—his unattractive outside, his ardent belief in the Christian religion and the value he set upon orthodoxy, his early struggles with poverty and obscurity, his knowledge of English literature, his common sense in criticism, and his Dictionary. Mrs. Meynell is defending one of her own sex, she is also vindicating one of the best and most lovable English men of letters, but she does more. She is guarding that most mysterious, holy and private thing—human affection, from the impertinent and unfeeling. Hear her scorn and sarcasm at the beginning and in every paragraph! Macaulay's words are callous and coarse and deserve censure, but the critics get almost more than they deserve; it is as though they have rejected all good feeling, as though they have unloosed every honourable opinion in flouting the choice of Dr. Johnson and mocking at his undying love. Hear her triumphant vindication at the end of one of the paragraphs: "Time gave him a younger wife." And hear her maintaining that English Letters have cast on their champion the slight he would have heeded most.

**Page. 136 "Tetty."** Johnson called his wife Tetty or Tetsey which is short for Elizabeth.

**vanity of their human wishes.** One of Dr. Johnson's poems is entitled, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. The title suggests the subject and spirit of the poem, and Mrs. Meynell says that men would find their own vain wishes known and exposed in Johnson's searching moralising.

**Thrale.** Johnson became acquainted with the Thrales in 1765. He was very friendly with them, especially with Mrs. Thrale, and often lived with them until after Mr. Thrale's death. In 1784 Mrs. Thrale married an Italian music master, Signor Piozzi.

**Page 137. Not a thought of that debt** . . . Boswell tells us that Garrick mimicked Mrs. Johnson, and Sir John Hawkins slanders her in his *Life of Johnson*. The reader should turn up Boswell under the years 1736 and 1752 for a nobler picture.



**Page 139.** "She accepted . . . . This is Macaulay's 'well-known way', this is how he 'points his paragraph'.

**Page 140.** So indeed she was. . . . Beauclerc, a high-born and high-bred man of the world was among the followers who included Goldsmith the poet, Reynolds the artist, Gibbon the historian, Burke the orator and Garrick the actor, to name only the best known. The biographer is, of course, Boswell, and the patron Lord Chesterfield. The Prospectus of the Dictionary was addressed to the Earl of Chesterfield who gave the Doctor a few guineas and then closed his doors against him. When the Dictionary appeared in 1755 it was without a dedication. These are the names of the destitute women who found shelter under his roof: Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Desmoulins and her daughter, Miss Carmichael, Dr. Levett and a negro servant, Francis Barber, completed the household.

**Page 141.** He wrote praises of her manners and of her person for her tomb. The following is a translation of the epitaph

Here are buried the remains of Elizabeth  
Of the ancient family of Jervis,  
Who was born at Peatling, near Leicester,  
Beautiful, elegant, clever, pious ;  
Wife, by first marriage, of Henry Porter,  
By second marriage, of Samuel Johnson :  
Who covered with this stone her who  
Was much loved and long lamented.  
She died in the month of March  
A. D. 1752 at London.

## THE PEAL OF BELLS

ROBERT LYN D

**Mr. Lynd**, who was born in 1879, is an Irishman, and it is fitting that the most witty essay in this book should be his. This quotation from Lamb will explain the title : "Of all sound of all bells—(bells, the music highest bordering upon heaven)—most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year."

**Page 144.** Then Truth comes out of her well—Numa, the second King of Rome, was thought to have received the religious truth which he taught his people from the nymph, Egeria, who lived in a grove wherein was a well.

**Page 146. Horace.** (65—8 B. C.) This eminent Latin poet wrote Satires, Epistles and Odes. In the first he criticizes the society of his time, the second are more personal and expressive of his inner self. The following is a translation of the Latin—"If thou knowest not how to live worthily, make room for those who have the skill. Thou hast sported enough, thou hast eaten enough, thou hast drunken enough. It is now time for thee to be off, *lost*, having drunk overdeep of life's pleasures, thou be jeered and hustled off the stage by a generation whose irresponsible freaks *suit* better with its years."

Towards the end of the 4th Century B. C. there arose in Athens two schools of philosophy, the Epicurean and the Stoic. Epicurus made pleasure life's object though he exalted the reason which is to measure pleasures and he admitted virtue as necessary to the happy life. The Stoics were founded by Zeno and were so called from the Stoa or painted corridor where they met. They taught that the object of life is the perfection of the soul; thence flows harmony and perfect action. Reward or punishment is irrelevant, so is pleasure indeed it does not accompany (they held) the highest activities of the soul. Stoicism flourished best not in Greece but at Rome and the Emperor Marcus Aurelius is its noblest exponent.

## THE HARBOUR IN THE NORTH

HILAIRE BELLOC

**Mr. Belloc** unites in most of his essays the historian and the traveller. His sense of history carries you beyond the mere present in every scene into the larger world of time and sometimes, as in this essay, the banks of time recede and are lost in the dark of the eternal world. To travel with Mr. Belloc over Roman roads or to mediæval cities or to learn history with him are alike valuable experiences. In the one he compels you to look and think and ask questions and feel; in the other he gives you the true spirit of history, the spirit to watch men plan and do. But in the present essay you must discern and feel a deeper, mystical meaning in every part, in the arch of the sunset mingling with the dawn, in the eyes of the stranger 'full of the broad daylight'. The essay is half poetry and waits for you to read your own meanings into it.

It is from the book, *Hills and the Sea*.

**Page 150. whose gleam showed....** Notice this true and therefore beautiful simile.

**Page 152. The voyage which I was born to make....** This paragraph bears the influence of Platonism. A parallel might be found in the

beautiful thought of 'the Christian Middle Ages, that the blessed dead after passing through the River of Oblivion to free themselves from earthly memories and sorrows, pass through the River of Fair Memory to remember joys which are eternal though they come to us in time. The river is thus described by Dante in the Purgatorio XXVIII.

Upon this side with virtue it descends,  
Which takes away all memory of sin ;  
On that, of every good deed done restores it.  
Here Lethe, as upon the other side  
Eunoe, it is called.

**Page 154. Orkney.** Islands to the north of Scotland.

**Page 155. that Town of which this man spoke.** Compare " They (i.e., the prophets of old) desire a better country, that is, a heavenly : wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." (Hebrews XI, 16).

Those to whom this last essay appeals may like to read these three descriptive, mystical poems of Wordsworth--two sonnets beginning " Where lies the Land to which yon Ship must go ? " and " With Ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh," and a lyrical poem, "*Stepping Westward*," beginning, " What, you are stepping westward ? "

